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India capable of retribution: PM

‘Those casting evil eye on Indian soil in Ladakh have got befitting response’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sending out a stern message in the backdrop of the ongoing India-China stand-off on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the eastern Ladakh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the country has given a befitting response to “those who cast an evil eye on Indian soil in Ladakh” and affirmed that India was capable of answering any adversary. Addressing the nation in his monthly radio broadcast ‘Maan ki Baat’, the Prime Minister said the world after acknowledging Indian spirit of universal brotherhood in the difficult time of coronavirus pandemic, has now also noticed India’s commitment and might “when it comes to safeguarding her sovereignty and territorial integrity.” Towards this end, he said India would not “shy away” from giving a befitting response to his adversary, Modi said. “Those who cast an evil eye on Indian soil in Ladakh have got a befitting response. India honours the spirit of friendship...she is also capable of giving an appropriate response to



- Those who cast an evil eye on Indian soil in Ladakh have got a befitting response
- Our brave soldiers have proven that they will not let anyone cast an evil eye on the glory and honour of Mother India
- The entire country bows to them in reverence, with gratitude. Just like their family members, every Indian painfully regrets the loss
- A self-reliant India would be a tribute to our martyrs in the truest, deepest sense
- The country has moved out of the lockdown phase to the unlock phase and will have to focus deeply on two points — defeating corona and strengthening the economy and bolstering it

any adversary, without shying away. Our brave soldiers have proven that they will not let anyone cast an evil eye on the glory and honour of Mother India,” the Prime Minister said in his address which was devoted to the border escalation, coronavirus pandemic and theme of ‘Atmnrabharta’ (self-reliance). Without naming the ‘Galwan’ in eastern Ladakh where 20 Indian soldiers were killed in skirmish with Chinese army, the Prime Minister said the entire country comes together in paying tributes to the bravery of our jawans who “attained martyrdom in Ladakh.” “The entire country bows to them in reverence, with

gratitude. Just like their family members, every Indian painfully regrets the loss. The inner sense of pride that families feel on the supreme sacrifice of their brave sons...their sentiment for the country, constitutes the true power, the might of the country,” he said. Without naming India and China, Prime Minister quoted a Sanskrit saying to explain two diverse characters. “Vidya Vivadaya Dhanam Madaay, Shaktih Pareshaan Paripeednayakhalasya Sadhoh Vipareetaan Etat, Gyaanaydaanaych Rakshanay. Which means, a person who is wicked by nature, uses education to foster conflict, wealth for conceit and strength to trouble others. Whereas, a gen-

tleman uses education for knowledge, wealth for helping and strength for protecting. India has always used her might, echoing the same sentiment. India’s solemn resolve is to safeguard her honour and sovereignty. India’s aim is a self-reliant India,” he said. The Prime Minister said all should strive towards enhancing the country’s capabilities and capacities in safeguarding our borders. “A self-reliant India would be a tribute to our martyrs in the truest, deepest sense,” Modi said and cited messages from across the country pledging to buy only ‘swadeshi’ goods. “Rajni ji has written to me from Assam. She says, after watching what happened in

eastern Ladakh, she has taken a vow...and the vow is that she will buy only ‘local’...and for the sake of ‘local’, she will also be vocal. I am receiving messages on these lines from every corner of the country. Many have expressed through their letters that they have adopted this very path. “Similarly, Mohan Ramamurthy from Madurai, writes that he wishes India to be self-reliant in the defence sector,” the Prime Minister said lending a new credence to ‘boycott-China’ pitch in the country. The current trade deficit is heavily loaded in favour of China which existed in the times of Congress rule but continued to be same during the Modi Government. The current border escalation has fuelled anti-China sentiments across the country with Prime Minister asking countrymen to adopt a new ‘mantra’ of Swadeshi. Modi said in the fields of defence and technology, India is relentlessly endeavouring to advance and taking strides towards self-reliance. **Continued on Page 2**

Chinese firms donated to PM Cares Fund also: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Facing a BJP offensive on fund received from China by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, the Congress on Sunday hit back at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for receiving about ₹50 crore as donation from Chinese companies in the PM Cares Fund to fight Covid-19 pandemic in India. The Congress alleged that even after the Chinese forces have transgressed into Indian territory, the Prime Minister kept receiving donations from Chinese companies. The Opposition party also sought details from BJP chief JP Nadda about certain funding of the BJP and the RSS from China and asked the ruling party to disclose its link with the “China Association for International Friendly Contact” (CAIFC) and reasons for its regular interactions with the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Senior Congress spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi asked, “Why has PM Modi received Chinese money in the PM Cares Fund, despite the overt Chinese hostilities?”

Opposition party seeks details of funding to BJP, RSS from China



Has the PM received ₹7 crore from the controversial company Huawei? Does Huawei have a direct connection with People’s Liberation Army of China? Has the Chinese company owning TikTok facilitated a donation of ₹30 crore to the controversial PM Cares Fund? The Congress also sought to know whether the PM Cares Fund received donations about

₹100 crores from Paytm, which has 38 per cent Chinese ownership, and from other Chinese firms like Oppo ₹1 crore and Xiaomi ₹15 crore in the fund. “Has Prime Minister Modi diverted the donations received in PMNRF to the controversial PM Cares Fund and how many hundred crores is the amount diverted?” Singhvi asked at the AICC virtual Press conference. Singhvi said reports suggest that as on May 20, 2020, the fund received ₹9,678 crore. “No one knows the constitutional or operational framework of the PM Cares Fund and how it is controlled or money given to it utilised. The fund is not even subject to audit by any public authority including CAG. The PMO has gone to the extent of saying this fund is not a public authority.” “The fund appears to be solely run by the Prime Minister in an opaque and secret fashion with zero transparency and zero accountability,” claimed Singhvi. **Continued on Page 2**

China sent martial arts fighters for Galwan clash, says report

Mountain climbers also visited: Chinese media

AFP ■ NEW DELHI

China reinforced its troops near the Indian border with mountain climbers and martial arts fighters shortly before a deadly clash this month, state media reported. Tensions are common between the two nuclear-armed neighbours in the mountainous border terrain, but this month’s fighting was their deadliest encounter in over 50 years. Five new militia divisions, including former members of a Mount Everest Olympic torch relay team and fighters from a mixed martial arts club, presented themselves for inspection at Lhasa on June 15, official military newspaper China National Defense News reported. State broadcaster CCTV showed footage of hundreds of new troops lining up in the Tibetan capital. Tibet commander Wang Haijiang said the Enbo Fight



Club recruits would “greatly raise the organisation and mobilisation strength” of troops and their “rapid response and support ability.” China National Defense News reported, although he did not explicitly confirm their deployment was linked to ongoing border tensions. Chinese and Indian troops clashed later that day in the most violent confrontation between the two powers in decades, in the Ladakh region 1,300 kilometres away. India says 20 of its soldiers were killed in brutal hand-to-hand combat that day, while China suffered an unknown

number of casualties in the skirmish fought with rocks and batons without any shots fired. India on Thursday said it had reinforced troops in the contested Himalayan border region, saying it was matching a similar buildup by China. Chinese state media have in recent weeks highlighted military activity, including high-altitude anti-aircraft drills, in the Tibet region bordering India. The new troops were recruited with the aim of “strengthening the border and stabilising Tibet,” China National Defense News said. **Continued on Page 2**

Shah allays fear of 5.5L cases in Delhi by July end

There is no community transmission, Govt taking all steps: HM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said there was no community transmission of the novel coronavirus in Delhi, and said the Centre was coordinating with the state on managing the outbreak. In an interview to ANI, Shah also said remarks made by Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia in early June about the national capital reaching 5.5 lakh Covid-19 cases by the end of July had created “fear” among people and he expressed confidence that the stage will not be reached. He said the Government had already planned in providing 30,000 Covid-19 beds by end of June in Delhi. Shah said the Centre has taken several steps to ramp up infrastructure and health facilities in Delhi in order to contain the spread of novel coronavirus in the national Capital. In that process, the Government had already planned in providing 30,000 Covid-19 beds by end of June, Shah said.



He said the rates of isolation beds and ICU treatment has also been reduced significantly in Delhi and a committee was set up for the purpose. “By June 30, 30,000 beds will be available. Eight thousand beds have been made in railway coaches and 8,000 beds are being prepared. DRDO is making an exclusive Covid-hospital in which there will be 250 ICU beds and with ventilators. A 10,000-bed facility has also been set up at the Radha Soami Beas, (Chhattarpur) keeping the rainy season in mind. The 9,937 beds arranged by Delhi Government earlier have not been occupied completely. It is not that they have not made arrangements but if the situation worsens, we have planned in advance,” Shah said,



Suspected virus patient at the Covid ward of the LNJP Hospital in New Delhi on Sunday
Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer

as reported by ANI. He said it was the concern of people of Delhi that private hospitals are charging arbitrary rates. “In my meeting, a decision was taken that a committee of doctors would be set up that would listen to private hospitals, consider best practices and extra cost in treating Covid-19 patients,” he said. “The rates for ICU without

ventilators were between ₹34,000 to ₹43,000. Now it is ₹13,000 to ₹15,000. ICUs with ventilators previously use to cost ₹44,000 to ₹54,000. It has now been brought down to ₹15,000 to ₹18,000. It includes tests for Covid-19, medicines. And in case of a diabetic patient, the next treatment is also included. It is a sealed package,” he added. **Continued on Page 2**

LNJP doctor dies of Covid in pvt hospital

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A doctor of the city Government-run LNJP Hospital died of Covid-19 in the ICU of a private dedicated coronavirus facility here on Sunday, sources said. The doctor, a consultant anaesthesiologist, died in the morning, they added. LNJP Hospital is a dedicated Covid-19 facility under the Delhi Government. “He lost the battle today after a valiant fight,” a hospital source said. Sources said the doctor died in the ICU of Max Smart, a dedicated Covid-19 facility in Saket. Several hundreds of health-care workers have been infected with Covid-19 till date in Delhi. A doctor from Fortis Escorts Heart Institute, who was a resident of Batla House in south Delhi, recently died of the novel coronavirus infection. A 39-year-old doctor from Odisha had died of Covid-19 in the ICU of the Delhi Government-run Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital on June 20.

Bid to oust Oli after new map Act: Oli

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal’s Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli on Sunday claimed that efforts are being made to oust him after his Government redrew the country’s political map by incorporating three strategically key Indian territories. “Efforts are being made to remove me from power, but that will not succeed,” Oli claimed, without naming any person or country. He said nobody has openly asked him to quit. “But I have smelt undercurrent movements,” Oli said on Sunday while speaking at an event. **Continued on P2**

Running nose, nausea, diarrhoea 3 new symptoms of coronavirus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The United States Centers for Disease Control has added three new symptoms to identify coronavirus infection, taking the total number of symptoms up to 12. The new symptoms are congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhoea. The symptoms were added on May 13, but have been reported only now. Earlier, the CDC considered chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell as Covid-19 symptoms. The other symptoms are fever, cough and shortness of breath. In its May 13 update, the CDC said the new list does not include all possible symptoms, and that it would be updated again as the organisation continues to learn more about the contagion. In April, the CDC had asserted that runny nose was rarely a symptom of the virus, and that sneezing had not yet been identified as a symptom. People with Covid-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported, said a statement. **Continued on P2**

World corona cases cross 1cr mark

AP ■ BALTIMORE (US)

Confirmed coronavirus infections have surpassed the 10 million mark worldwide. A tally compiled by Johns Hopkins University registered the grim milestone on Sunday, after India and Russia added thousands of new cases. The United States has confirmed more than 2.5 million infections, the most in the world. Globally, the Hopkins tally has reported nearly 500,000 deaths. While Hopkins reports

only confirmed coronavirus cases, experts believe the true number of people who have been infected could be as much as 10 times that figure, given that so many people can’t get tested or may have the virus without showing any symptoms. Meanwhile in India, a record single-day spike in Covid-19 cases was reported in several States like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and West Bengal as the country-wide tally rose by nearly 20,000 on Sunday.



Covid-19 IN INDIA

TOTAL CASES: 5,48,869

DEATHS: 16,487

RECOVERED: 3,21,774

ACTIVE: 2,10,552

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	1,64,626	7,429	86,575
Delhi	83,077	2,623	52,607
Tamil Nadu	82,275	1,079	45,537
Gujarat	31,397	1,809	22,808
Uttar Pradesh	22,147	660	14,808
West Bengal	17,283	639	11,193
Rajasthan	17,271	399	13,611
Telangana	14,419	247	5,172
Haryana	13,829	223	8,917
Karnataka	13,190	207	7,509
Madhya Pradesh	13,186	557	10,084
Andhra Pradesh	13,098	169	5,908
Bihar	9,224	62	7,156
Assam	7,166	10	5,089
Jammu & Kashmir	7,093	94	4,316
Odisha	6,614	28	4,743

Auto driver succumbs to police brutality in Tamil Nadu

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Police brutality claimed one more life in Tamil Nadu. An auto-rickshaw driver who was subjected to severe assault in police custody died in a Government Hospital at Tenkasi on Sunday. The youth has been identified as Kumaresan. Navaneethkrishnan, father of Kumaresan, alleged in a complaint that his son was subjected to third degree physical assault by Sub Inspector Chandrasekar and constable Kumar in connection with a land dispute. Kumaresan was taken to the police station twice and was beaten up by the sub-inspector and constable. A case has been filed against cops Chandrasekar and Kumar under section 174 (3) of Cr.PC. for allegedly beating Kumaresan to death. Meanwhile, following mass protests across the State, the Tamil Nadu Government has decided to transfer the investi-

Mass protest across State



gation into the Satankulam custodial death case from Tamil Nadu Police to the CBI. This was announced by Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami while speaking to journalists at Salem on Sunday. The decision comes a day ahead of the hearing of the suo motu petition by the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court about the custodial death of P Jeyaraaj and his son J Feniks.

“The Government will explain about the decision to hand over the probe to the CBI to the Court on Monday and only after getting the court’s approval, it will be handed over to the CBI,” said the CM. “We have already instructed the police to deal with general public and traders delicately. In case of a problem, a case should be filed before taking any action. We have also told police to not disturb the general public unnecessarily,” said Palaniswami. Jeyaraaj and Feniks were taken into custody by police on June 19 on charges of violating the lockdown rules. Both the father and son died immediately after they were sent to Kovilpatti prison following their remands and since then there has been an uproar from a cross section of society demanding action against cops responsible for the deaths.

Maha sees 5K plus cases on Sunday

TI RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

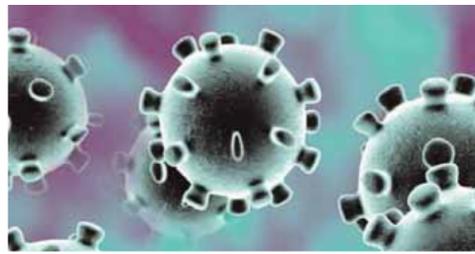
Maharashtra recorded 5,000-plus Coronavirus positive cases for the third consecutive cases on Sunday, as the State added 5,493 new infected cases to its tally and 156 more succumbed to the pandemic.

After it recorded 5,024 and 5,318 deaths on Friday and Saturday respectively, Maharashtra once again witnessed a biggest-ever record of 5493 positive cases, taking the total number of the infected cases in the State to 1,64,626.

Out of the 156 deaths reported in the state today, 60 occurred in the last 48 hours and 96 deaths are from the previous period.

With 156 new deaths, the total number of deaths in the state mounted to 7,429.

Of the 156 deaths reported on Sunday, Mumbai accounted for 87 deaths, a tally that took the total number of deaths in Mumbai from 4,284



to 4,371 now. The total number of infected cases in the metropolis rose by 1,287 cases to touch 75,539.

In addition to 87 deaths recorded in Mumbai, there were 26 deaths in Thane, 20 deaths in Pune, 8 in Nashik, 6 in Jalgaon, 4 in Solapur and death each in Jalna, Amravati, Yavatmal, Sangli and Ratnagiri.

With 34,257 cases and 845 fatalities, Thane district - has emerged as the second worst-hit district after Mumbai in the state. With 86,575 patients having been discharged from various

hospitals after full recovery since the second week of March this year, the recovery rate in the state stood at 52.59 per cent. The mortality rate in the state is 4.51 per cent. The state health authorities pegged the number of 'active cases' in the state at 70,607.

On the laboratory testing front, 1,64,626 (17.82%) out of 9,23,502 samples sent to laboratories tested positive for Covid-19 until Sunday.

Currently, 5,70,475 people are in home quarantine while 37,350 people are in institutional quarantine.

No private hospital in Karnataka can deny Covid-19 treatment

Bengaluru: No private hospital or medical establishment in Karnataka can turn away or deny treatment to Covid patients, said a top official on Sunday. "Private medical establishments in the state shall not deny, refuse or avoid treatment to patients with Covid and Covid like symptoms," ordered Chief Secretary T.M. Vijay Bhaskar.

Bhaskar highlighted that the government took note of some private medical establishments in the state refusing treatment to Covid patients.

According to the chief secretary, such refusals amount to violating Section 11 of the Karnataka Private Medical Establishment Act, 2017, which mandates that every private medical establishment should actively participate in the implementation of all national and state health programmes.

"Private medical establishments shall actively participate in the implementation of all national and state health programmes in such manner as the state government may notify," said Bhaskar.

The chief secretary said it is also the statutory duty of all private medical facilities to prevent the spread of communicable diseases and adhere to the Patient's Charter.

Bhaskar invoked the Disaster Management Act 2005 and passed the orders in the capacity of the chairman of the State Executive Committee, Disaster Management, under the powers vested under Sections 24(f) and 24(I).

He also directed the private hospitals to strictly comply with the provisions of Sections 11 and 11 A of the Karnataka Private Medical Establishments Act 2017 and the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

State Health Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Pandey also clarified that no private medical college, hospital or similar establishment can deny treatment to Covid patients.

Govt approves additional ₹1,691 cr for highway works in J&K, Uttarakhand

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has approved an additional ₹1,691 crore for highway works by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand for 2020-21.

Of this, ₹1,351.10 crore has been sanctioned to BRO for road works in Jammu & Kashmir, the road transport and highways ministry said in a communication to Border Roads Development Board (BRDB) Director General Lt Gen Harpal Singh.

A total of ₹340 crore ceiling has been approved for Uttarakhand for national highways, according to the communication dated June 24.

In addition, it has also given nod for additional sanction of ₹71 crore for highway works by the state's Public Works Department in Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu.

Besides, it has also enhanced the total ceiling to ₹1,955 crore for highways work for Nagaland under Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) from the existing

₹1,081 crore.

"Competent authority has approved the additional sanction ceiling for NH(O) works for the year 2020-21 to states /UTs of Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu for state PWDs and for state/ UT of Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand for BRO," the communication said.

It said that the existing sanction for national highways (original) work for state PWDs was ₹2,269 crore, which has been raised to ₹2,340 crore. In addition, ₹1,691 crore ceiling was approved for BRO, taking the additional ceiling of Rs 4,081 crore for national highways in these areas.

"For NH(O)-General projects for state govts/UTs, 20 per cent of the sanction ceiling has been proposed for cross drainage works. Sanction of damaged cross drainage work may be given topmost priority," the communication said.

Widening of national highways (NHs) and their strengthening under the annual plan 2020-21 may be suitably finalised by project zones in

consultation with additional DG/ DG (road development) and special secretary, it said.

"Efforts may be made to award all the sanctioned works under spillover/ balance sanction ceiling and additional sanction ceiling already given and at least 50 per cent of sanctioned works under instant additional sanction ceiling," it added.

Earlier, National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) enhanced the remuneration of its personnel working in tough terrains.

NHIDCL, a fully-owned company of the Government of India, under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, is engaged in building, maintaining and upgrading national highways and strategic roads, including interconnecting roads in parts of the country which share international boundaries with neighbouring countries.

The roads are built in difficult terrain under inhospitable and hostile weather conditions and other environmental factors.

AP corona tally crosses 13K-mark, death toll reaches 169

ANS ■ AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh's Covid-19 tally witnessed yet another massive jump in cases on Sunday, with 813 new cases reported from various parts of the state. The Sunday's tally is the highest single-day count of corona cases reported so far. The update, which includes returnees from other states and overseas, takes the overall tally to 13,098 in Andhra Pradesh.

The previous single-day high of 796 was reported a day earlier, on Saturday. The 24 hours ending 9 a.m., Sunday also saw as many as 25,778

samples tested for the virus. Till date, the state has conducted tests on 8,41,860 samples tests.

On Sunday, the number of recoveries was also high with 401 persons cured and discharged from hospitals in the state. The tally of cured persons is 5,908 while 7,021 persons are currently being treated at different hospitals in Andhra Pradesh.

The death toll also climbed up significantly on Sunday, with 12 persons reported dead.

The latest updates take the state death toll to 169. Of the 12 deaths reported on Sunday, six occurred in Kurnool, five were reported from the Krishna

districts, and one death was reported from the West Godavari district.

On Sunday, 12 of the 13 districts reported fresh cases during the preceding 24 hours. Kadapa reported the highest tally of 111 cases followed by Kurnool with 103, and Guntur with 90 cases. Some of the other districts with high incidence include Chittoor with 82 cases, and Krishna with 79 cases. Srikakulam district was the lone district where not even a single new case was detected during the preceding 24 hours.

The Sunday did not witness much change in the number

of covid cases detected among people returning from other states. Compared to 51 cases on Saturday, 50 new cases were detected in this category on Sunday.

The bulk of positive cases were detected among the Telangana returnees with 18 positive cases. Similarly, 14 of the covid positive samples belonged to the returnees from Tamil Nadu, and 10 cases were from Maharashtra. Apart from this, three cases from Delhi, two from Madhya Pradesh, and one each from Odisha and Chattisgarh were also reported in the past 24 hours.



People gather to collect drinking water from a tanker at Vivekanand Camp, without following social-distancing guidelines, during the ongoing Covid-19 lockdown, at Chanakyapuri in New Delhi, on Sunday

Bid to oust me after new map Act: Oli

From Page 1

It was held to commemorate the 69th birth anniversary of the popular leader of the Nepal Communist Party late Madan Bhandari at the Prime Minister's residence. "There have been various kinds of activities in the embassies and hotels," he claimed. "If you listen to the news media from Delhi, you will get the gesture." He said some Nepalese leaders were also involved in the game to remove him immediately. The differences between Prime Minister Oli and his opponents including the ruling party's executive chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" have surfaced during the ongoing Standing Committee meeting of the party. Oli, who faced criticism within his party for skipping the first and the second day of the Standing Committee meetings, attended the third meeting on Saturday, but briefly. He, however, did not speak at the meeting.

"In the past when I signed trade agreements with Beijing, my minority government collapsed. But this time we have a government with a full-fledged majority, so no one can remove me now," Oli said on Sunday. "I did not commit any mistake by claiming our land, which has been snatched from us for the past 58 years after Nepal enjoyed the rights over these areas for 146 years," Oli said.

Nepal this month completed the process of redrawing the country's political map through a Constitutional amendment, incorporating three strategically important

Indian areas. India has termed as "untenable" the "artificial enlargement" of the territorial claims by Nepal after its Parliament unanimously approved the new political map of the country featuring Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura areas which India maintains belong to it.

The India-Nepal bilateral ties came under strain after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated a 80-km-long strategically crucial road connecting the Lipulekh pass with Dharchula in Uttarakhand on May 8.

Nepal reacted sharply to the inauguration of the road claiming that it passed through Nepalese territory. India rejected the claim asserting that the road lies completely within its territory. Speaking on condition of anonymity, a senior leader of the ruling NCP told PTI that Oli's indication was his opponents within the ruling party, not from outside.

"There has been growing differences within the ruling party and the Prime Minister is being cornered within his own party and his own colleagues are criticising the government's performance," he said. Another NCP leader said that Oli's absence in the first two days of the meetings showed the growing differences between him and Prachanda.

Prachanda has time and again spoken about the lack of coordination between the government and the party and he was pressing for a one-man one position system to be followed by the NCP.

Chinese firms donated to PM Cares Fund also: Cong

From Page 1

The Congress spokesperson questioned that "if the Prime Minister of India will compromise his position by accepting donations of hundreds of crores from Chinese companies in the controversial and opaque fund, then how will he defend the country against Chinese aggression?"

The Congress alleged that the Modi Government continues to sidestep the brazen Chinese transgressions and occupation of Indian territory by Chinese forces in Galwan Valley, Pangong Tso lake area, Hot Springs and Depsang plains up to Y-Junction.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi unashamedly misleads the nation and serves the sinister agenda of the Chinese by claiming that China has never intruded into the Indian territory, nor is it in occupation of any territory," alleged Singhi.

The Congress leader said that the party will keep asking these questions in the national interest.

Two days ago BJP presi-

dent JP Nadda had alleged that the RGF, which is headed by Sonia Gandhi, continuously received donations from the Chinese Embassy between 2005-09, from the "tax haven" of Luxemburg between 2006-09 and NGOs with commercial interests.

Congress clarified on this issue on late Saturday night that grant RGF accounts were duly audited and statutory returns were filed under Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA) to the Government of India.

"This grant has been duly reflected in all filings to the income tax and the Home Ministry and no authority has ever found any wrongdoing of any nature.

Pursuant to the unprecedented Tsunami in the last week of 2004, RGF received a modest amount of Rs 20 lakh from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund in the Financial Year 2005 which was duly utilised to undertake relief activities in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands," the Congress said in a statement.

Govt extends deadline to bid for Air India by 2 months till Aug 31

New Delhi: The Government has again extended the deadline to bid for Air India by two months till August 31 as the Covid-19 fallout has disrupted economic activities globally.

This is the third time the deadline has been extended. The divestment process for the national carrier was initiated on January 27.

Issuing a corrigendum to the Expression of Interest (EoI) for sale of Air India, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) said the deadline has been extended in view of the prevailing situation arising out of Covid-19.

While issuing the EoI in January, the last date for bids was kept at March 17, which was later extended till April 30. This was further extended to June 30, and now till August 31.

Also, the date for intimation to Qualified Interested Bidders (QIBs) has been extended by two months till September 14, the DIPAM said in the corrigendum posted on its website.

"Further changes with respect to the Important Dates, if any, will be communicated to the Interested Bidders subsequently," it added.

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have disrupted economic activities globally.

The aviation sector has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, with airlines cancelling flights and announcing pay cuts for employees.

The Government has already extended the time given to investors to bid for its entire 52.98 per cent stake in Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) to July 31. The initial deadline was May 2, which was extended till June 13.

After its unsuccessful bid to sell Air India in 2018, the government in January 2020 restarted the divestment process and invited bids for selling 100 per cent equity in the state-owned airline, including Air India's 100 per cent shareholding in AI Express Ltd and 50 per cent stake in Air India SATS Airport Services Private Ltd.

In 2018, the government had offered to sell 76 per cent stake in the airline.

Of the airline's total debt of Rs 60,074 crore as of March 31, 2019, the buyer would be required to absorb ₹ 23,286.5 crore, while the rest would be transferred to Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL), a special purpose vehicle.

Gujarat registers highest 624 cases, deaths cross 1,800

ANS ■ GANDHINAGAR

Coronavirus continues to batter Gujarat, as 624 new cases were detected, taking the total count to over 31,000-mark, though daily death count has reduced, health officials said on Sunday.

The state has been witnessing over 580 new cases of virus infection everyday, for the last couple of days, taking the count of infected persons and casualties higher and higher. Surpassing the Saturday's highest count of 615, the state Registered 624 new cases, taking the total to 31,397.

Ahmedabad came up with 211 new cases, a substantial decrease from 300, over the past week or so.

Now Surat is turning out to be a new epicenter in the state. The city witnessed the second highest number of positive cases detected so far -- 184, matching Friday's 182.

Surat was followed by Vadodara, which has a steady daily count of around 44-45 positive cases. Sunday was no exception as 44 new cases were added.

Vadodara was followed by Valsad (36), Gandhinagar and Patan (11 each), Rajkot,

Kutch, Surendranagar, Amreli and Junagadh (10 each), Mehsana and Bhavnagar (8 each), Banaskantha and Bharuch (7 each), Kheda (6), Aravalli, Navsari and Morbi (4 each), Sabarkantha, Anand and Botad (3 each), Panchmahals, Jamnagar and Porbandar (2 each) and Gir-Somnath, Tapi and Narmada with one positive case each.

The silver lining in the Corona crisis since last couple of days is that, the number of casualties which had been over 30 for almost entire month of June has now come down under 20. Just like previous three days, Sunday reported 18 casualties out of which Ahmedabad had the highest share of 13 casualties, while 3 patients died in Surat.

With this, the death toll in the state has crossed 1,800-mark with 1,809 total fatalities. The total number of Corona deaths in Ahmedabad has reached 1,426 (78.82 per cent), 151 died in Surat, 49 in Vadodara, 29 in Gandhinagar, 16 in Aravalli, 15 each in Panchmahals and Patan, 13 each in Bhavnagar and Anand and 11 have died in Mehsana.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, M/s. Supertech Limited, under the Migration Policy dated 18/02/2016 of Town and Country Planning Department, has proposed to migrate part License No. 124 of 2014, granted for setting up of Plotted Colony, for obtaining license for Affordable Plotted Colony (DDJAY-2016). M/s. Supertech Limited has not created any third party rights on the applied land under migration policy on an area measuring 5.14785 acres. If any allottee of the Licensed Colony, under License No. 124 of 2014, has any objection to the above stated migration, the same may be submitted in the office of District Town Planner, Gurgaon within 30 days from the date of issue of this public notice.

Reg. Office: T114, Hemkunt Chambers, 89, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019

Running nose, nausea, diarrhoea 3 new symptoms of coronavirus

From Page 1

The symptom ranged from mild symptoms to severe illnesses," the CDC said in a statement in April, adding these symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

The health body also laid out a set of emergency warning signs for Covid-19 that require immediate medical attention - including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, trouble breathing, new confusion, and bluish lips or face.

India capable of retribution: PM

From Page 1

On the coronavirus crisis, Modi said the country has moved out of the lockdown phase to the unlock phase and will have to focus deeply on two points -- defeating corona and strengthening the economy and bolstering it.

"Only your alertness can save you from corona. Always, remember, if you do not wear a mask, do not observe the two-yard social distancing norms or do not take other precautions, you are putting others at risk besides yourselves, especially the elderly and children at home," he said and requested countrymen to not be negligent.

In another reference, the Prime Minister quoted an inspiring story of Mandavali, Karnataka, where, he said, an 80-85 year-old elder Kamegowda, Kamegowdaji, an ordinary farmer, who takes out his animals for grazing but at the same time has taken up himself to build new ponds and, so far, dug out 16 ponds in his area, Modi said.

China sent martial arts fighters for Galwan clash...

From Page 1

India says Chinese troops ambushed Indian soldiers and forced them down a ridge where they had gone to remove a Chinese "encroachment". A bilateral accord prevents the use of guns, but the fighting was still fierce, with rudimentary weapons.

China has in turn accused Indian soldiers of twice crossing the Line of Actual Control, the unofficial boundary, provoking its troops.

The two countries fought a war over the border in 1962. There is an understanding between the nuclear-armed neighbours that their troops in the disputed and inhospitable region will not use firearms.

Shah allays...

From Page 1

He said teams were constituted comprising doctors from the Delhi Government, AIIMS and ICMR to help reduce shortcomings.

Speaking about his visit to the Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital (LNJP), Shah said not only did it bring issues being faced on the ground to the front, but also boosted the morale of the health workers. He said the Delhi Government conveyed that the number of ambulances, oxygen cylinders and ventilators needed to increase.

"We immediately provided 500 oxygen cylinders, around 10,000 oximeters and 440 ventilators and will provide more as and when needed.

NOTICE

A notice of intended marriage has been received from Mr. Karan James Misquitta S/o Mr. Damian Misquitta Rio Flat No. 302, Plot No.-123 ST. Civil Road Bandra west Mumbai Maharashtra-400030 and Ms. Saumya Vaishnava D/o Mr. Girish chandra Vaishnava R/o. C-101, H.No. 340, Sector 29, Noida Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.) in the office of the undersigned, any person interested therein, may the objections to it on any day upto 06-07-2020 in the office of at the undersigned.

Marriage Officer
Noida Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.)

WESTERN RAILWAY

CORRIGENDUM

Tender No.: 29204981J, Date: 27/06/20, Description: PPE KIT FOR COVID-19 QTY: 210000 Due on: 07/07/2020 EMD: ₹ 611520. To view the corrigendum regarding revised Specification of PPE Kit, Eligibility Criteria & Splitting Clause, please visit website www.ireps.gov.in and www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in

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IN FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

Govt has received tremendous support from Centre: Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Sunday said the Delhi Government has received tremendous support from the Centre in the fight against coronavirus.

"Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal sought help and support of every agency to prevent the further spread and got tremendous support from Central Government, religious organisations like Radha Soami Satsang, Akshardham temple trust, Terapanthi, various hotels, banquet halls, private hospitals and NGOs," he said.

Sisodia said in the first week of June, there was a sudden spike in corona cases. "A number of measures were

taken to control the situation such as reserving 40 per cent beds in all big private hospitals for Covid in addition to declaring some big hospitals like GTB hospital as Covid hospitals. Hotels were converted into hospitals and 3,500 beds were prepared in hotels which addressed the shortage of beds," he said.

"Today, there is no shortage of beds in Delhi. We sought central government help to increase testing and they helped us with procuring rapid testing kits. Since then, testing has been increased by four times. The Central Government also provided us with oxygen cylinders, ITBP doctors and nurses for Radha Soami Covid centre



and guidance from domain experts," he said.

Delhi CM has brought everyone together and his efforts seem to be paying off, he said, adding last week saw things stabilising with the recovery rate has increased to 62 per cent.

"Today more patients are recovering in Delhi than those who are falling ill, the number of deaths are coming down,



People wait to get tested in New Delhi on Sunday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

and the positivity rate is decreasing rapidly," he added. "We are hopeful that the situation will improve in the coming weeks and will cer-

tainly not be as bleak as it looked in the first week of June when domain experts predicted 5.5 lakh cases in Delhi by 31 July," he said.

2,889 FRESH CASES REPORTED

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With over 2,889 fresh coronavirus cases reported on Sunday, the number of cases has reached 83,077 in the national Capital. However, 2,623 persons have died till now in which 65 died on Sunday. As per the Sunday health bulletin released by the Delhi Government, 52,607 patients have recovered, been discharged or migrated so far, while number of active cases stood at 27,847, adding 4,98,416 tests have been conducted till date, it said.

The number of containment zones in the city on



A man waits to get tested in New Delhi on Sunday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Sunday stood at 417. It added calls received in the control room are 378 and the total number of calls dispatched to

ambulances is 875.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Government has issued an order regarding creation of hospital bed capacity by linking the operation of health care facilities for Covid-19 in identified banquet halls to the hospitals for running the centres as extended facilities of the hospital.

"An order has been issued regarding operating hospital beds in banquet halls in coordination with the linked hospital and another order was also issued regarding operationalisation of 450 beds in Burari hospital in phased manner," it said.

99% people support boycott of Chinese goods: CAIT survey

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a survey conducted by the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) across the country, at least 98.8 per cent people supported the boycott of Chinese goods.

While disclosing the results of the survey, CAIT national president B C Bhartiya and secretary general Praveen Khandelwal said that CAIT's online survey conducted for nine days among cross section of the people including traders, farmers, hawkers, consumers, self-entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, working women, students and people from social organisations enthusiastically participated in the survey.

"About 11 thousand people across the Country were invited to take part in the survey out of which 9,735 people responded to the survey," they said.

The survey was conducted from June 19 to June 27 and 9,735 people from across the country while participating in



the survey expressed their opinion on nine questions asked in the survey and answers to the extent of more than 90 per cent were in affirmative which reflects that India stands united against China aggression and the people of India are determined this time to teach a lesson to China, the traders' body said.

Bhartiya added nine questions asked in the survey. "The respective responses were very similar on most of the issues like when asked do you agree that China aggression against Indian Army is wrong, 95.8 per cent were agreed. When asked that do you feel pain after the

death of 20 brave Indian soldiers in Ladakh recently, 97.6 per cent said yes," he said.

Similarly, when asked if you agree that it is enough and we should teach a lesson to China, 97.6 per cent had given a similar opinion saying yes. The next question asked, 'Do you stand with Indian Army, 99.8 per cent agreed,' he added.

Khandelwal said the results of the survey affirm the strong commitment of Indian people to fight vigorously against China in future. "It was important to observe that the percentage of answers to all the questions in the nine-day survey remained the same which shows that people across the country have a very firm and transparent opinion on the issue and there is no illusion at all," he said.

The traders' body had already called for a boycott of Chinese goods, listing 450 imported items, condemning China's military aggression along the Line of Actual Control in Eastern Ladakh.

Vijender Gupta inaugurates 2 isolation centres in Rohini

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Former Delhi BJP president Vijender Gupta on Sunday inaugurated two isolation centres in Rohini that are equipped with all required infrastructure.

"These isolation centers have been developed by the societies at our request. Six beds in the isolation center of Atma Vallabh Society have been arranged. There is also an arrangement of oxygen cylinders on each bed," Gupta said.

Gupta added the move is



taken to strengthen our fight against Corona. "The isolation center in the society is also important that if someone gets

infected, they will be able to get treatment in the same environment as home and will recover soon," he added.

Delhi Police conducts mock drill

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Following the Intelligence inputs of possible terrorist attack at busy markets in Delhi and in view of the prevailing security scenario, the Delhi Police conducted a mock drill exercise at Southeast Delhi's Nehru Place Market.

Nehru Place complex is the largest market of Asia for computers in present scenario.

According to Kumar Gyanesh, the Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Southeast district, to check preparation of police official and personnel in untoward situation and to check coordinated response from other agencies, a Mock Drill exercise was conducted on Saturday at Nehru Place Market, Kalkaji Delhi.

"Around 1,000 Government,

Semi-Government and private offices and shops are situated in the complex. Mock Drill was started at 11.00 AM when a PCR call about a blast near Punjabi Khana Nehru Place Market was received at Kalkaji police station," the Additional DCP said.

"Acting on the call, armed with sophisticated weapons and other equipments, immediately rushed to the spot and controlled the situation. The

Cinema hall security guard commits suicide

New Delhi: A 23-year-old security guard of a cinema hall in central Delhi's Daryaganj area allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself from the ceiling of the theatre's switch room on Sunday. The deceased was identified as Sanjay Kumar (23), resident of Balliya in Uttar Pradesh.

According to Sanjay Bhatia, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Central district, on Sunday a PCR call was received

that a person had committed suicide at Delite Cinema on Asaf Ali Road, Daryaganj.

"Acting on the call, a police team was dispatched for the spot. On reaching the spot, a man was found hanging from the ceiling of the switch room of the cinema hall. He was identified as Sanjay Kumar, who was working as a security guard at the cinema hall," said the DCP. SR

Following inputs of possible terrorist attack



Bomb Disposal Squad, Fire Brigade, Crime team and other agencies reached the spot in time and controlled the situation," he added.

Cong plans protest at 400 petrol pumps across Capital today

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With diesel price being on a record high in Delhi and petrol on a two-year high, Delhi Congress has planned to hold protests at around 400 petrol pumps across the Capital on Monday to protest against the fuel hike.

Delhi Congress president Anil Kumar will lead the protest on Monday and demand immediate roll back of the price hike by both the Centre and Delhi Government. Congress workers will follow the social distancing norms while holding the protests, the party said in a statement.

Kumar said prices of petrol and diesel are being increased by the insensitive Modi Government for the last three weeks.

At the same time, the Kejriwal Government has also hiked 'Vaur Added Tax' (VAT) on petrol and diesel which is unfair.

Man held for duping policy analyst online

New Delhi: The Delhi Police has arrested a 31-year-old man for allegedly duping Sanjaya Baru, a political commentator and policy analyst of Rs 24,000 on the pretext of online delivery of liquor. The accused — Akib Javed, a resident of Kaman, Bharatpur, was nabbed from his native place after a raid on Saturday. He used to work as taxi driver earlier but indulged in cyber crime to make easy money, police said, adding efforts are being made to nab his associates who are absconding.

According to Atul Kumar Thakur, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South district, the matter came to notice on June 2, after they received a complaint from Baru. "In his complaint, he alleged that while he was searching for a shop online to purchase liquor, he found an online liquor shop in the name 'La Cave Wines and Spirits'. When he contacted on the given number to place the order, he was asked to pay

online," said the DCP.

"After making a payment of approximately Rs 24,000, the alleged person switched off his mobile phone. A case was registered at Hauz Khas police station under section 420 (Cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property) of the Indian Penal Code and an investigation was taken up, said the DCP. "During preliminary investigation, the bank statements, flow of cheated money and call details of the alleged mobile numbers were done and that they were obtained on the basis of fake KYC details," said the DCP.

"After analysing transactions details, various mobile numbers used to avail banking alerts, accused was traced to Kaman, Baharatpur area. To mislead investigators, accused took SIM cards and bank accounts registered at different States like Assam, Maharashtra, Punjab and Rajasthan," the DCP said. SR

Seven arrested in Gr Noida for 'illegal mining'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NOIDA

The Gautam Buddha Nagar police has nabbed seven people in Greater Noida on Sunday allegedly for illegal mining. According to a senior police official, an earthmover (JCB) and a tractor-trolley were also impounded during the mining in a jungle near Khedi Bhanaura village, under the Surajpur police station limits.

"Those held have been identified as Jagendra, Manoj Kumar, Mahendra Singh, Rajesh Pal, Rambabu Singh, Lalit Kumar and Hari Om," said the senior police official.

"Except for Hari Om, who is a native of nearby Baghat district, all accused are local residents," he said.

"One more of their accomplice, who has been identified as local resident Rakam Singh, fled the mining spot and search is underway to arrest him," he added.

Birds in summer suffer from heat exhaustion

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Over 30 birds suffering from heat exhaustion have been rescued by Wildlife SOS in the months of May and June in Delhi-NCR. These birds were treated for dehydration and injuries caused mid-flight and have been safely released into their natural habitat.

As the temperature has skyrocketed in the national Capital, birds in and around Delhi-NCR are also facing the brunt of the heat wave gripping the city.

A wildlife official said, "As temperatures reached 45 degrees Celsius last week, a flood of calls on the Wildlife SOS emergency helpline number (+91-9871963535) kept the rescue team on their toes!"

On a single day, the team has responded to over ten calls regarding exhausted birds that were found in precarious conditions, amongst them Black kites, Pigeons, Asian Koyals, Barn Owls and Common Mynah birds. In one such incident, a baby Mynah had fallen out of its nest in Shankar Vihar and was rescued by a Wildlife SOS team when the family noticed the tiny bird in their



Asian Koel crashed headlong into a glass building in South Extension, New Delhi due to heat stroke



Pigeon suffering from heat exhaustion rescued from South Delhi



Raptors such as kites are more prone to heat exhaustion as they fly at higher altitudes

garden. It was reunited with its mother soon after!

Kartick Satyanarayan, CEO, Wildlife SOS, said, "The most common symptoms we have been observing in these birds are dehydration and heat exhaustion. Every year we get hundreds of calls during the peak of summer regarding birds that have fallen victim to the heat. We are very grateful for these individual acts of kindness and for the people who take the time and effort to care for these birds while help arrives."

In another incident, an Asian Koel crashed headlong into a glass building in South

Extension, New Delhi due to heat stroke. The bird sustained minor injuries and was released by the Wildlife SOS team after successful treatment.

Wasim Akram, Deputy Director - Special Projects, Wildlife SOS, said, "A large number of birds are falling prey to the soaring temperature due to heat exhaustion and lack of shade. With various parts of North India reeling under the heatwave such cases are bound to escalate in the months to come. Even the water bowls put out for these birds are drying up in the heat and so are local water bodies. As birds need to bathe

themselves in summer to keep cool, this is causing quite a difficult situation. In most cases, immediate medical attention is required to prevent them from succumbing to heat stroke."

Summer season is the breeding time for birds, so the conservation organisation has received many calls involving baby birds. Raptors such as kites are more prone to heat exhaustion as they fly at higher altitudes. Planting more trees and leaving earthen water bowls around residential complexes, windows and terraces is helpful in preventing such situations from arising.

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MINISTRY OF FINANCE
Government of India

Cong seeks funding details to BJP, RSS from China

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday sought details from BJP chief J P Nadda about certain funding sources to the BJP and the RSS from China and demanded disclosure of its link to the "China Association for International Friendly Contact" (CAIFC) and its persistent interactions with the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The attack comes two days after BJP President J P Nadda had alleged that the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, which is headed by Sonia Gandhi, continuously received donations from the Chinese embassy between 2005 and 2009, from the "tax haven" of Luxembourg between 2006 and 2009 and NGOs with commercial interests.

The Congress sought to clarify the issue late on Saturday saying the grants to RGF accounts were duly audited and statutory returns were filed under Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA) to the Government of India.

In turn, it attacked the BJP and RSS for receiving funds from China and under the leadership of three party chiefs at different times—Rajath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, Amit Shah.

"This (RGF) grant has been duly reflected in all filings to the income tax and the Home Ministry and no authority has ever found any wrongdoing of any nature. Pursuant to the unprecedented Tsunami in the last week of 2004, RGF received a modest amount of Rs. 20 lakh from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund in the Financial Year 2005 which was duly utilised to undertake relief activities in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands," Congress said in a statement.

Congress, in another statement on Sunday, also



said that the allegations by Nadda were his flailing attempts at distraction and diversion from the issues of national security and territorial integrity.

Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the BJP chief has made it his "favourite pastime to mislead the country by making sensational claims".

Surjewala accused the BJP of receiving foreign funding. Surjewala also said the BJP leadership was scared of the questions being asked on its "deep-rooted" Chinese connections.

Surjewala posed 10 counter questions to Nadda in response to the questions posed by the latter to attack the Congress. "What is the historical relationship between BJP and CCP spoken about by the then BJP President, Rajath Singh during the visit of a CCP delegation on January 30th, 2007 and reiterated by him during the meeting with members of Politburo of the CCP on October 17th, 2008," Surjewala asked.

Congress also sought explanation as to why the RSS go to China in January 2009 on an invite from the CCP? Why was a delegation

of RSS invited by the CCP despite it not being a political party and what discussions were held on our sensitive State of Arunachal Pradesh as also Tibet?

It further asked why did the then BJP President, Nitin Gadkari go to China on a five-day visit on January 19th, 2011 at the invitation of the Communist Party of China (CCP)?

Why did the then BJP President, Amit Shah send a delegation of MP's/MLA's in November 2014 to China for a week-long study in "The Party School" of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)?

Besides questioning the several visits by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to China, Congress asked BJP to make public the list of all its donors and the amounts received including from all foreign sources including individuals, entities, organisations, and governments.

Surjewala also questioned funding to Vivekananda Foundation and the India Foundation and demanded that the ruling side declare the name of donors from whom it has received thousands of crores in donations through electoral bonds.

VANDE BHARAT MISSION Air India to operate 114 flights to bring back stranded Indians abroad

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Civil Aviation on Sunday said that Air India will be conducting 114 flights to and from 17 countries between July 3 and 15 under the fourth phase of the Vande Bharat Mission to bring back stranded Indian abroad.

Under the fourth phase of the mission, Air India will be conducting 114 flights connecting India with Canada, the US, the UK, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Kyrgyzstan, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Thailand, South Africa, Russia, Australia, Myanmar, Japan, Ukraine and Vietnam. The Ministry also stated that private airlines have volunteered to contribute significantly to the new phase, operating around 498 flights.

The Government started the mission on May 6 to help stranded people reach their destinations using special repatriation flights. Scheduled international passenger flights have been suspended in India since March 23 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Under the fourth phase, 31 flights will be operated to USA, 19 to UK, nine to Canada and eight to Australia. The national carrier will operate 26 flights between India and Saudi Arabia, it added.

Air India Express is scheduled to operate 300 chartered flights to and from various countries in July. Of them, 136 flights is scheduled to be by July 14 while 164 flights will be operated between July 15 and 31. The first phase was from May 7 to

The Government started the mission on May 6

16, following which the second phase began.

The US Department of Transportation announced on June 22 that it has barred Air India from operating chartered flights between India and the United States from July 22 without its prior approval, in an apparent retaliation for the Indian Government not allowing American carriers to operate between the two countries. Therefore, on June 23, the Aviation Ministry had said that it was considering establishing "individual bilateral bubbles" with the US, the UK, Germany and France allowing airlines of each country in the pact to operate international passenger flights.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said last Friday it is extending the suspension of scheduled international passenger flights in the country till July 15 but added that some international scheduled services on selected routes may be permitted on a case-to-case basis.

According to Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Puri, more than 1,47,000 Indians have returned and more than 52,000 have flown out to different countries so far under the mission.



Covid-19 death toll soars to 16,095 in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The gap between cured coronavirus patients and active cases of Covid-19 has crossed 1,00,000 on Sunday, according to Union Health Ministry even as total coronavirus cases in the country has surged to 5,28,859 while the death toll increased to 16,095.

Presently, there are 2,03,051 active cases while a total of 3,09,712 patients have been cured of COVID-19 so far. 13,832 patients recovered in the last 24 hours. The recovered cases have exceeded the active cases by 1,06,661 as on Saturday, the ministry said.

The recovery rate is 58.56% amongst COVID-19 patients.

India now has 1,036 diagnostic labs dedicated to COVID-19. This includes 749 in the government sector and 287 private labs.

"Daily more than 2,00,000



samples are being tested. The samples tested in the last 24 hours have further increased to 2,31,095. The total number of samples tested, as on date, is 82,27,802," the Government said.

As on June 28, the COVID related health infrastructure has been strengthened with the availability of 1,055 dedicated COVID Hospitals with 1,77,529 isolation beds, 23,168

ICU beds and 78,060 oxygen supported beds, it said.

Also, 2,400 dedicated COVID Health Centres with 1,40,099 isolation beds, 11,508 ICU beds and 51,371 oxygen supported beds have also been operationalised.

Besides, 9,519 COVID Care Centres with 8,34,128 beds are now available to combat Covid-19 in the country, the Ministry said.

Farmers have sown in around 31.56 million hectares so far to cover up lockdown losses

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a move to cover up lockdown losses, farmers across India have sown in around 31.56 million hectares so far, which was 104.25 per cent more than the same period last year. In just one week, the area under cultivation has gone up from 13.13 million hectares to 31.56 million hectares. According to Ministry of Agriculture's data, acreage of almost all crops was higher than last year.

The biggest increase is in oilseeds, under which area has gone up by more than six times. The area under pulses has increased by up to three times. Central India, which has received the heaviest rainfall in the country this season, is a major area for these crops. In just one week, the area under cultivation has gone up from 13.13 million hectares to 31.56 million hectares.

The data showed that area under rice the main kharif crop, has increased to about 37.71 lakh hectare (ha) this year as compared to 32.05 lakh hectare during the corresponding period of last year, an increase of 34 percent. Higher acreage of rice reported from Punjab (3.99 lakh hectare), Uttar Pradesh (2.63 lakh ha), Madhya Pradesh (2.15 lakh ha), Arunachal Pradesh (0.98 lakh ha) while less areas under rice cultivation are



reported from Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Odisha, West Bengal and Karnataka.

Similarly Pulses were sown in around 1.94 million hectares, as against 0.60 million hectares last year. The higher pulses cultivation reported from Maharashtra, MP, Telangana, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Gujarat while sugarcane sown higher from UP, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

The data showed that about 49.69 lakh ha area coverage under sugarcane as compared to 47.77 lakh ha during the corresponding period of last year.

Oilseeds were sown in around 8.33 million hectares till Friday, compared to 1.33 million hectares in the corresponding period last year. Cotton was sown in around 7.16 million hectares, com-

pared to just 2.70 million hectares last year.

Coarse cereals were planted in around 4.79 million hectares, as opposed to 2.44 million hectares last year.

The Government has set a target of 149.92 million tonnes of food grain production in the current kharif season and 148.4 million tonnes in the rabi (winter sown) season, taking total food grains target to a record 298.3 million tonnes in the 2020-21 crop year.

The Met Department had predicted above normal monsoon this year.

India has received 174.6 mm rainfall, an increase of 22 percent so far as against the normal of 143.3 mm.

Till date, the southwest monsoon has covered the entire country, 12 days ahead of its normal onset.

Shah talks to Nitish over Bihar flood situation, assures all help

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday spoke to Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and enquired about the rising water level of Mahananda River and assured him of all possible help from the central government for the protection of the people of Bihar," Shah tweeted in Hindi.

The home minister also tweeted: "Spoke to Assam Chief Minister Shri @saranandsonowal and Shri @himantabiswa to take stock of the alarming situation in Brahmaputra river and landslides near Guwahati. All

due to the rising water of the Brahmaputra.

"I spoke to Chief Minister Shri @nitishkumar ji about the rising water level of Mahananda River in Bihar and assured him of all possible help from the central government for the protection of the people of Bihar," Shah tweeted in Hindi.

Separately, the home minister also spoke to Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and took stock of the alarming situation developing

possible help has been assured to the State. Modi government stands firmly with the people of Assam."

Water level of the Mahananda river is expected to go up due to heavy rains in Nepal and areas between the Mahananda and Bagmati river basins.

The flood situation in Assam worsened on Saturday with two more people losing their lives due to the deluge, which has affected over 4.6 lakh people across 21 districts, officials said.

SC junks exam cancellation plea

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Sunday in an urgent hearing dismissed a plea seeking cancellation of the remaining two Class 10 examinations scheduled to be held on June 29-30, to be conducted by the board of secondary education of Rajasthan, said a lawyer appearing for the State Government.

The bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna, in an urgent hearing conducted on Sunday evening through video conferencing, dismissed the plea filed by one Maghi Devi.

Senior advocate Manish Singhvi who appeared for the state government said the bench after hearing the peti-

tioner and the state dismissed the plea.

The apex court was hearing an appeal filed by Devi, mother of an examinee of the Class 10 board, against the May 29 order of the Rajasthan high court which had dismissed a plea seeking cancellation of the remaining examinations conducted by the State's board of secondary education.

The appeal said that the board of secondary education of Rajasthan had passed a direction for conducting the remaining two papers of Class 10 on June 29 and June 30 and 11,86,418 students are likely to appear.

It said the board had conducted the last exam on March 18 and thereafter the examinations were deferred due to the COVID-19 pan-

demic and the nationwide lockdown.

The appeal further contended that around 120 schools, which have been earmarked as examination centres, had been used to quarantine migrant workers during transit to their native places.

The appeal also referred to the June 26 order of the top court with regard to remaining examinations of Class 10 and Class 12 of CBSE board as well as of ICSE board.

The appeal had sought an interim stay on the remaining examinations to be conducted on Monday and Tuesday.

The petitioner before the High Court had also sought cancellation of remaining examinations to be conducted by CBSE due to COVID-19.

Office of the Executive Engineer
Provincial Division, P.W.D., Hapur
E-Mail Id: pwwcd03@gmail.com

No: 747 /3A Date: 16-06-2020

E-Procurement Notice inviting Tenders

1. On behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites online bids through e-tendering from the registered firm for (Road/Bridge/Building) Category A, B, C and D as per applicable. The bid document may be uploaded from dated 04.07.2020 to 11.07.2020 up to 12.30 PM. Technical bids will be opened online on date 11.07.2020 at 02.30 PM, in the office of the Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, P.W.D., Hapur. Date of financial bid will be informed separately to the technically qualified contractors. In case of holiday or office closed the technical bid/financial bids will be opened on next working day in the same manner.

Sl. No.	DISTRICT	Name of Work	Estimate cost (Rs. in Lac)	Bid Security (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of tender	Time of Completion	Address of Executive Engineer	Address of Superintendent Engineer	Address of Chief Engineer
1	HAPUR	Renewal work/General repairs with PC on Garh-Meent road km-2 to Jhadina Sadulpur Hirapur to Akhhapur Road	31.00	3.10	300 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
2	HAPUR	Renewal work/General repairs with P Con B.B. Nagar road to Simbholi N.H-9 Via Hingwara Lalpur Bhama Road.	15.00	1.50	300 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
3	HAPUR	Renewal work/General repairs with PC on N.H.-24(New N.H-9) Sikhera to Pimnagar Dattiyana Via Agapur Via Madhopur Link Road	17.00	1.70	300 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
4	HAPUR	Renewal work/General repairs with PC on Sharifabad Link Road	5.30	0.53	225 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
5	HAPUR	Renewal work/General repairs with PC on Garh-Meent road to DR International School road.	7.00	0.70	225 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
6	HAPUR	Renewal work/General repairs with PC on Doma-Tikri to Sukhdapur Link Road	15.00	1.50	300 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
7	HAPUR	Renewal work/General repairs with PC on Village Jhakseda to Rajapur Canal Road	4.00	0.40	150 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
8	HAPUR	Renewal work/General repairs with PC on Hamidpur Sikandrabad-Kuchesar road to Rasoolpur road	4.20	0.42	150 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
9	HAPUR	Renewal work/General repairs with PC on Shama to Singapur Link road	17.50	1.75	300 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
10	HAPUR	Special repair of Meent Badyun Road to Salai Road	16.30	1.63	300 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
11	HAPUR	Special repair of Nehar Patni to Humayunpur Via Savi	11.60	1.16	225 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
12	HAPUR	Re-Construction on Tatarpur to Siladei Link road with CC. in financial year 2019-20	16.20	1.62	300 +500 +GST @18%	3 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
13	HAPUR	Construction work of parking shed construction, balance drainage and lighting in the transit hostel of district Hapur	16.00	1.60	300 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
14	HAPUR	Reconstruction of Damage Minor Bridge in KM 02 at Dibai to Shareepur Shampur Road in Distt. Hapur	35.00	3.50	300 +500 +GST @18%	3 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
15	HAPUR	Renewal (Normal repair) with PC on Dibai Bridge (Canal Patni) Meent Boarder to Rajapur Road (ODR)	20.10	2.00	300 +500 +GST @18%	2 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent
16	HAPUR	Construction of Table Top Speed Breaker in City Portion financial year 2019-20	14.50	1.45	225 +500 +GST @18%	1 Month	EE, SE, BSR-Circle, PWD, Bula ndshahar	PD, PWD, Hapur	MZ, PWD, Meent

3- Details and conditions/rules related to bid available on Website <http://etender.up.nic.in>

Assistant Engineer P.D., PWD, Hapur Executive Engineer P.D., PWD, Hapur

UP- 152701 Date 19.06.2020 विज्ञापन वेबसाइट www.upgov.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।

IDBI Bank told to provide details of GD and interviews' marks of DGM post aspirants

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Court of Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD), which operates under the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment's Persons with Disabilities Department has directed the IDBI Bank to provide details of the marks of group discussion and interviews of all the candidates appeared for its DGM post during 2011 to 2019.

The move followed a complaint by one Anuj Bhardwaj with 80 per cent of the locomotor disability who had alleged that despite his eligibility for the said post, he was ignored by his organisation where he had been working for the past 28 years.

Bhardwaj had approached the CCPD in August last year but because of the Covid-19 pandemic, his case could not be taken up. But now the CCPD which has started taking grievances through video conferencing held the

enquiry in his case on June 24.

Bhardwaj submitted that he had joined IDBI Bank as Hindi-cum-English typist way back in 1991 under PwD category and rose up to the rank of Assistant General Manager due to his hard work.

In 2011, he had applied for the post of DGM but was not selected. Ditto in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018 and 2019 when while his juniors were promoted he was denied the same for all these years.

He was told by the IDBI that as there was no reservation in the promotion within the Officer's cadre.

However, not ready to give in, Bhardwaj approached the CCPD alleging that the IDBI was taking pretext of "Selection Method" of the organization which changes as per the convenience of the management.

He said that while he achieved all the parameters prescribed in various categories, but that his interview/Group

Discussion was lacking in debatable.

He also alleged that never a list of total mark of all the officers called for group discussion was published nor the details of marks were displayed, which could suggest transparency in the selection process.

During hearing, the IDBI also admitted that only four officers with disabilities were promoted during 2011-2019.

After hearing the complainant and going through the written submissions of the respondent and other documents available on record, the CCPD Chief Commissioner Shakuntala Doley Gamlin has now instructed the IDBI Bank to submit details which could prove transparency in the selection process.

The CCPD has also sought details of the cut of marks of all the candidates as well minutes of the selection committee appeared from 2011 to 2019 within the next two weeks.

OFFICE OF SUPRINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
MEERUT CIRCLE MEERUT
APAR AYUKT UDAYOG CAMPUS, SURAJKUND ROAD MEERUT
E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Letter No. 173/RED/Tender-Work/File No.----/2020-21/ Date: 19.06.2020

1. THE SUPRINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, MEERUT CIRCLE MEERUT on behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids through e-tendering system from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP RED, in appropriate class A, B, and C as the case may be. The Bidder may submit bids for any or all of the works.

Sl. No.	Name of District	Name of Block/ Constituency	Name of work	Total estimated cost (in Lakh) Rs.	Bid security (EMD) (in Rs.)	Cost of Bid document (in Rupees)	Period of completion including rainy season
1	Bulandshahar	Bulandshahar	Construction of Paramveer Chakar Vijeta Shri Yogendar Singh Yadav Primary Health Center at Village Aurangabad Aheer Distt. Bulandshahar.	125.00	2.50	2714.00	6 माह

3. Date of availability of Bid documents on website- 14.07.2020
4. Last Date/Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement: 21.07.2020 up to 12.00 Noon
5. Date of opening of bids through e-procurement: 21.07.2020 at 12.30 pm
6. The Employer has right to issue addendum/corrigendum as per ITB clause-10 on-line which will not be published in any news paper. All prospective bidders are advised to keep regular watch and visit e-tender portal regularly.
For further details please log on to <https://etender.up.nic.in> and download the bid document

(Er. Ajay Singhal)
SUPRINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT,
MEERUT CIRCLE MEERUT
For and on behalf of Governor of UP

U.P.: 152884, Date : 25.06.2020
विज्ञापन वेबसाइट www.up.gov.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।

Mother of slain terrorist arrested by J&K Police

For recruiting youths in terror ranks

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Her son Tausif Sheikh was earlier gunned down by the security forces along with one of the top Hizbul Mujahideen commander Saddam Padder and Mohammad Rafi Bhat, an assistant professor in Kashmir University in Badigam area of Shopian on 6th May 2018

Security forces in Kashmir Valley are in the habit of escorting parents, especially mother of a terrorist, near an encounter site to make a last minute 'emotional' appeal to him to lay down his arms and surrender before them but in one of the rare cases, Jammu & Kashmir police has now arrested Naseema Bano, mother of a slain Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) from one of the South Kashmir districts of Kulgam.

Her son Tausif Sheikh was earlier gunned down by the security forces along with one of the top Hizbul Mujahideen commander Saddam Padder and Mohammad Rafi Bhat, an assistant professor in Kashmir University in Badigam area of

Shopian on 6th May 2018. According to official sources, Naseema Bano was evading arrest since then. According to police, she was arrested last week on June 20 from her residence in Rampora village of Qaimoh in Kulgam. Quoting Inspector General of Police, Kashmir range, the twitter handle of Kashmir zone police Sunday afternoon posted a tweet stating, "Jammu &

Kashmir Police does not target family of terrorists without evidence. Sister of active terrorist Abbas Sheikh & mother of neutralised terrorist Tausif, Naseema Bano was arrested on 20 June 2020 in FIR 30/2018. Besides, recent involvement in recruiting youth into terrorist ranks".

According to police, Naseema Bano has been charged by police for her recent involvement in recruiting youth in to terrorist ranks. Images of Naseema Bano, holding an automatic weapon, were also circulated on the various social media platforms.

Taking note of few provocative posts, aimed at instigating emotions of local residents, the police authorities have warned netizens against such acts aimed at disturbing peace.

BJP leader shot at in Bengal after clash with TMC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Unlock 1.0 saw Bengal returning to its known ways of political clashes with the BJP giving the ruling Trinamool Congress a taste of its own medicine at Nandigram where the cadres of the two parties engaged in a bloody clash on Sunday leaving several persons including a BJP district secretary injured, sources said.

Khejuri block adjoining Nandigram in West Midnapore district witnessed indiscriminate firing, bombing and housebreaking while marauding members from two sides fought with each other while the police looked the other way.

While the police refused reports of firing, Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh said Pabitra Das the district BJP secretary and "a very active worker was targeted by the Trinamool Congress goons with guns... he received gunshot injuries and has been admitted in a local hospital." Some other party men too

were injured in the clash, he complained.

Khejuri has been a traditional Left bastion that had recently turned saffron. Das a former CPI(M) local committee secretary who joined the BJP ahead of the panchayat elections was protesting against the TMC-run panchayat's alleged decision to sell off trees uprooted in super cyclone Amphan without floating tenders.

"Tension ran high in the village with both sides mounting attacks and counterattacks throughout the last week that saw many houses being looted and ransacked and many people getting injured in intermittent clashes," a local district officer said requesting anonymity.

"This is a government which has literally sold out the entire State to the syndicate wallahs and when our men are protesting they are being attacked with guns and bombs," Ghosh said in Kolkata adding.

Post lockdown Bengal had witnessed clashes breaking out between the two parties at var-

ious places of North and South 24 Parganas, Hooghly, Burdwan and Howrah over issues that were mostly related to corruption.

Khejuri is adjacent to Nandigram that hit national headlines following bloody clashes during a massive land movement led by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee (the then opposition leader) and her Midnapore points-man and present Minister Subhendu Adhikary in 2007. The movement eventually catapulted Banerjee to power.

With lockdown gone Bengal has started witnessing sporadic sporadic clashes between the BJP and TMC with the former launching rallies protesting against alleged corruption in providing relief to the people hit by Amphan.

Refuting BJP's allegations former Union Minister and local Trinamool MP Sisir Adhikary said his party had nothing to do with the clash adding the fight was between BJP and CPI(M) as many Left members were leaving that

party to join the saffron group. "We have our MP, MLA and the panchayat so why should we soil our party's name in the area by engaging in such fights. I have heard that the clash took place between the CPI(M) and BJP as many Left workers are leaving that party," Adhikary said.

Meanwhile the TMC has denied reports that the party is going to launch its third virtual rally on July 3 for the next year's Assembly elections.

This was made known by an official statement from the party that said, "we have been apprised of multiple reports in the media about an upcoming All India Trinamool Congress campaign. This is to clarify that there is no such official party campaign and the news is false."

Earlier reports said that TMC had decided to launch its third virtual campaign 'Soja Banglay Bolchi' (putting straight in Bengali.) much like the earlier ones like 'Didi ke Boloi' and 'Banglar Gorbo Mamata' campaigns.

Domicile law in J&K illegal and unconstitutional: Farooq Abdullah

Srinagar: Former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Sunday said that the domicile law is unconstitutional and illegal.

Speaking to reporters in South Kashmir's Anantnag district, he said he is not going to accept anything that is unconstitutional.

"We are united against everything they have done, it is illegal, unconstitutional. How do you think I am going to accept something what is unconstitutional," Farooq said.

Taking about the current stand-off between India and China at the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh, he said war is no solution to resolve the disputes between the countries.

"India-China or India-Pakistan, the only future is talks, war is not a solution," he said. IANS

3,940 afflicted, 54 die of virus in TN

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI/KOCHI

Yet another day of new highs and records in coronavirus pandemic in Tamil Nadu. On Sunday 3,940 persons were added to the list of patients diagnosed with coronavirus in Tamil Nadu. The State also saw 54 deaths on a single day which took the toll till date to 1,079. Chennai continues to be the city of death as 809 out of the 1,079 persons who lost their lives are from Greater Chennai Municipal limits.

As on Sunday evening there were 35,656 covid-19 patients in the State. The total number of covid-19 cases reported in Tamil Nadu till date rose to 82, 275.

Chennai which has been locked down since June 19, reported 1,992 coronavirus cases. With the State adminis-

tration giving clearance to one more private laboratory on Sunday, Tamil Nadu has 90 testing centres functioning 24X7. The laboratories continued aggressive testing with 31,505 persons getting tested on Sunday. According to a media release issued by the Government of Tamil Nadu late Sunday evening, a total of 1.05 million people have been tested in the State till date.

1,443 patients were discharged from hospitals across the State on Sunday taking the total number of persons getting cured to 45,537 till date. Out of the 54 persons succumbed on Sunday, 46 died with co-morbidities while eight had no comorbidity history.

Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami has convened a crucial meeting of medical experts and bureaucrats on Monday to discuss the state of

There was a small respite for neighboring Kerala which diagnosed 118 persons with covid-19 on Sunday

affairs. Corridors of power, especially in Fort Saint George, are agog with rumors of a possible extension of lock down in the four districts of Chennai, Chengalpet, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur and Madurai municipal corporation.

Giving credence to the rumors about extension of lock down is the number of persons diagnosed in these districts. Chengalpet (183), Kancheepuram (92), Madurai (284) and Thiruvallur (99) continue to be problematic spots in Tamil Nadu.

There was a small respite for neighboring Kerala which diagnosed 118 persons with

covid-19 on Sunday. It was a relief for Kerala where 195 persons were tested positive on Saturday. But the number of covid-19 patients in the State continued to be above 100 even on the 9th day in succession.

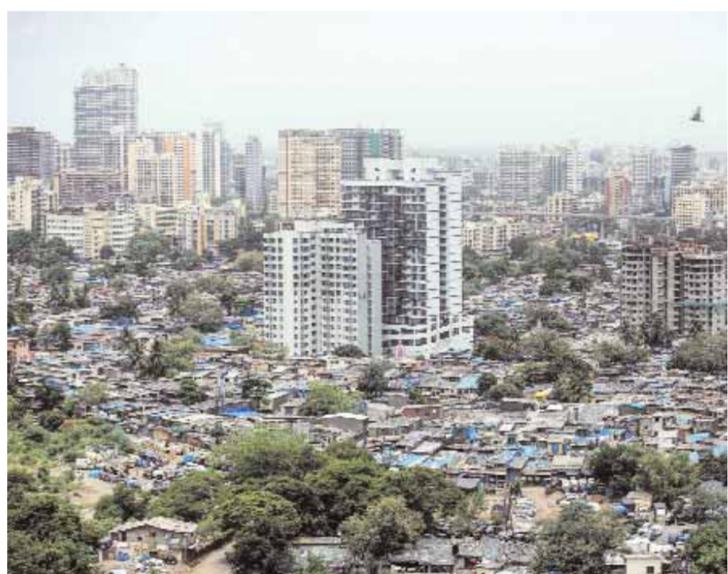
The State Health Department blamed the expatriates for the continued spurt in the pandemic. Out of the 118 positive cases, 68 were expatriates and 36 from other parts of the country. There were 14 cases of community transmission in the State on Sunday (cases in which the patients could not point out the source from where they got infected). There are 1.75 lakh persons under observation in the State. On Sunday, 335 persons were hospitalized while the State has sent 2.2 lakh samples for testing, said the release from the department of health.

Bride dies in midst of wedding rituals in UP

Kannauj (UP): In a tragic incident, a bride died even before the wedding rituals could be completed and the groom had to return without the bride.

The incident took place in Bhagatpurva village under Thathia police circle in Kannauj. The groom, Sanjay, arrived with his family members and the wedding rituals began on Friday night.

As the rituals began 19-year-old bride Vinita, suddenly complained of uneasiness and collapsed. Her family members rushed her to a medical facility that denied her admission until she tested negative for Corona. IANS



An aerial view of Anand Nagar slum area, a Covid-19 hotspot, at Malad in Mumbai on Sunday

PTI

Family fined over lavish wedding, groom & 15 others get coronavirus

Jaipur: The Bhilwara district administration has slapped ₹6.26 lakh fine on a family for organising a lavish wedding, attended by 250 guests flouting all Covid-19 norms and restrictions, on June 13.

While the number of guests was much above the permitted 50, one person died and 15 attendees, including the groom, had tested coronavirus positive by June 27.

Officials said the groom's grand-father died from Covid-19, and his aunt and uncle also tested coronavirus positive. However, the bride and 17 others tested negative.

All the 15 Covid-19 patients have been admitted to hospital and over 100 quarantined.

The State Government slapped a notice on the groom's father ordering him to foot the bill of the quarantine facility and treatment of infected people by paying ₹6,26,600 fine.

Bhilwara District Magistrate Rajendra Bhatt has asked the Tehsildar to recover the fine from the groom's

*Officials said the groom's grand-father died from Covid-19, and his aunt and uncle also tested coronavirus positive. However, the bride and 17 others tested negative

*All the 15 Covid-19 patients have been admitted to hospital and over 100 quarantined

*The State Government slapped a notice on the groom's father ordering him to foot the bill of the quarantine facility and treatment of infected people by paying ₹6,26,600 fine

father within 3 days, and deposit that in the Chief Minister Relief Fund.

Other expenses, to be incurred in coming days, should also be recovered from the groom's family, the order, issued under the Epidemic Act, added.

The order also said the groom, Rizul, and his father Gheesu Lal Rathi didn't follow the social distancing norms, were not wearing masks and there was no use of sanitiser at the event. IANS

Covid testing labs in K'taka can't reveal result to patients

IANS ■ BENGALURU

Covid testing laboratories in Karnataka cannot reveal the test result to patients directly but upload the information on the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) portal daily, said an official on Sunday.

"The Covid positive result status should not be conveyed to the individual (patient) by the authorities of the government or the private laboratories by any means," said a health official.

All government and private laboratories should upload the details of Covid positive and negative cases on the ICMR portal on a daily basis.

The laboratories should also submit the details of positive results to the concerned district surveillance officers, Covid surveillance officers, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and Bengaluru and state surveillance units.

In the event of a violation, authorities will recommend de-recognition of the laboratories.

"If labs deviate from this, they would be recommended for de-recognition by BBMP," said a civic body official about labs located in the city.

Currently, more than 75 laboratories are testing the virus samples in this southern state. So far, Karnataka has tested more than 5.81 lakh samples for Covid.

UP Govt's claim of providing one crore jobs bunkum: Cong

Lucknow: The UP unit of the Congress, here on Sunday, said the State Government's claim of providing more than one crore jobs was false.

Addressing the media, UP Congress chief Ajay Kumar Lallu said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government's claim of providing 1.25 crore jobs was 'plain trickery'. By making such claims, the BJP government was cheating people, he said.

"The BJP had promised two crore jobs every year. The unemployment in the state is at the 45-year high, as revealed by the government data. The unemployed youth are being cane-charged for demanding jobs," Lallu said.

No recruitment process was completed in a time-bound manner in the state, he added.

The Congress leader said the state government was claiming credit for providing jobs to the people engaged in traditional professions for generations.

He said the coronavirus pandemic had caused an economic disaster. "All the major indigenous industries, like glassware, brassware, carpet, weaving, furniture, leather, hosiery, dairy, pottery and fishery-hatchery, have been hit. Millions of weavers are in a pitiable condition. There is no government support for them," he said.

Lallu said people were being forced to commit suicide because of the financial reasons. Citing an incident, he said a migrant worker, who had returned to his village in the Banda district from Surat, committed suicide on Friday. IANS

Cong says 'unclear what Sharad Pawar said' after NCP supremo reminds it of 1962 war

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Smarting under the discomfiture over Sharad Pawar's suggestion to Rahul Gandhi not to politicise India-China violent stand-off, the Maharashtra Congress on Sunday said that using one of NCP chief's comments the media "should not draw any conclusions" and "rush to give a clean chit to Modi" and question Gandhi's stand on China.

A day after the media quoted Pawar as saying that "matters of national security should not be politicised" and "one cannot forget China had captured about 45,000 sq km of Indian land after the 1962 war" in the context of Rahul's criticism of Modi, Maharashtra Congress president Balasaheb Thorat said. "It is still not completely clear what Shri. Sharad Pawar Saheb has said."

"And by using just one of his comments the media should not draw any conclusions and rush to give a clean chit to the Prime Minister and raise questions on the stand taken by Shri. Rahul ji Gandhi. I am sure that Pawar Saheb is worried by Chinese incursion too," Thorat said.

Talking to media persons at

Satara in western Maharashtra, Pawar had said: "We can't forget what had happened in 1962 when China occupied 45,000 square kilometres of India's territory. While making these allegations, one should also look at what had happened in the past. This is an issue of national interest and once should not bring in politics here."

Pawar, who is the supreme leader of the NCP that has formed a three-party government in alliance with the Shiv Sena and Congress in Maharashtra, had made these remarks when his attention was drawn to Gandhi's allegation that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had surrendered Indian Territory to the Chinese aggression.

Among other things, the NCP chief had also said that the Centre could not be blamed for the standoff at Galwan Valley. "Our soldiers tried to push back Chinese army men when they tried to encroach upon Indian soil. To say this is the failure of anyone or of the defence minister isn't correct. Had our army not been on alert, we wouldn't have known Chinese aggression," Pawar said.

In response, the State Congress president said in a

statement issued here: "The Congress is with the government on the China issue, but that doesn't mean that questions shouldn't be asked on the issues of national interest."

"The questions raised by Shri. Rahul ji Gandhi on border security is not politics, but a responsibility given by the people. We cannot compare the situation in 1962 with what is happening today," Thorat said.

"Not a single soldier has lost his life on the India-China border in 45 years. Our 20 soldiers were martyred at Galwan Valley due to China's aggression. Even then the Prime Minister says no-one intruded on our territory. Using these statements of his, China is calling our martyrs as intruders. Just like the Congress Party, Sharad Pawar Saheb too must have been saddened by this," Thorat said.

Maintaining that Gandhi had raised questions that are on the minds of the general public, Thorat said: "The concerns raised by Rahul ji are regarding the integrity of our Country. Even today the PM didn't utter a single word regarding the Chinese aggression in his Maan Ki Baat program. This is not the time to keep quiet."

Assam Rifles gives umbrellas in Mizoram villages to ensure social distancing

Aizawl: In an innovative attempt to follow 'social distancing by people, the Central paramilitary Assam Rifles have been distributing umbrellas to economically weaker sections of society and senior citizens in Mizoram, officials said here on Sunday.

An Assam Rifles official said the troops distributed umbrellas in Ngopa, Mimbung, Kawlbem, New Vaikhawtlang and Hmahlan villages in Aizawl district on Saturday, keeping in view the impending monsoons and to curb the spread of Covid-19. This initiative aims at promoting the maxim -- 'Break the Chain' -- in the fight against Covid-19.

"The residents have been urged to use umbrellas voluntarily at public places which would automatically ensure social distancing without any conscious effort," an official release said.

The new initiative by Assam Rifles was appreciated by village authorities and the residents as well. IANS



A herd of elephants takes shelter on a highland, in a flood affected area of the Kaziranga National Park, in Nagaon district on Sunday

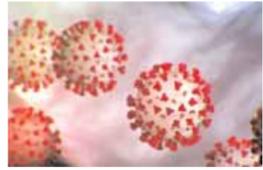
PTI

1,009 of 1,196 corona cases in Agra discharged after recovery

Agra: A recovery rate of 84.04 per cent from Covid-19 in Agra has been achieved after a multi-pronged attack on the virus, with a sustained focus on over 60 containment and buffer zones, health officials here have said.

In the past 24 hours, 12 new cases increased the tally to 1,196, while the number of patients discharged rose to 1,009 after 18 were sent home on Saturday following recovery. The number of deaths was 85. District Magistrate P.N. Singh said the number of active cases now was 103. So far 21,113 samples have been collected.

Health officials, however, warn that July would be the crucial month when the rate could spike to alarming heights, as Malaria and Dengue could compound the situation and increase the pressure on the already burdened medical infrastructure. IANS



Accordingly, various government agencies and departments are being geared up, and their activities being coordinated and reviewed by the nodal officer appointed by the Yogi government. The Agra Municipal Corporation has mounted a propaganda blitz to sensitize people on health related issues. Teams of doctors are visiting mohallas in the interior city to give consultations and medicines to the sick. The S.N. Medical College will have 200 beds ready for corona patients by June end. IANS

Crying shame

The brutal custody death of two men in Tamil Nadu has given us our #livesmatter moment. Book errant cops, now



If the ugly face of police brutality and the killing of George Floyd in the US incensed us in India, then we should be venting vociferously on the excesses in our own backyard, namely Tamil Nadu. A father and son in Tuticorin, who were booked for running their shop 15 minutes beyond closure during a lockdown — a minor infraction by any stretch — ended up dead after the local police subjected them to a long, brutal and sustained interrogation, torture and sexual abuse in custody. Fifty nine-year-old P Jayaraj and his son, 31-year-old J Fenix, were booked under Section 188 of IPC (Disobeying the time restrictions ordered by a public servant), Section 383 (Extortion by threat) and Section 506 (Criminal intimidation). However, disobeying Section 188 is not so serious an offence that requires sustained questioning and night-long torture in custody. Apart from that, there were no witnesses to back up the need for the police to book the two men under Sections 383 and 506. But witnesses living 500 metres away from the police station, where the two men were held, did hear their screams and cries for help through the night. The next day, when the men were released from custody, their clothes were found ripped and they were bleeding profusely from their private parts. Yet, they were given a clean bill of health by the doctor on duty, who obviously did not want to incur the wrath of the all-powerful inspector. And then they died within hours for lack of critical care. However, believing this has happened for the first time is ignoring the years of abuse and custodial deaths that common citizens have faced at the hands of the police. Particularly at the local levels of administration, the policing system has internalised the right to be the judge, jury and executioner. With Black Lives Matter protests erupting around the globe condemning police brutality, it is high time India, too, takes up the cudgels, raises its voice against rights violations and makes a common cause with the family of Jayaraj and Fenix. To our shame, the numbers of victims just keep rising. During the lockdown necessitated by the pandemic, incidents of excessive use of force by the police have become common news. Carts of fruit sellers have been overturned, vendors thrashed and rickshaw pullers beaten mercilessly. Migrant workers on long treks home have not been spared the humiliation and injury either. Anyone without the power to defend or stand up for himself is facing the ruthless hostility of the new enforcers of authority for the smallest of transgressions. Of course, the brutality during the lockdown isn't the only example worth noting. Visuals of the ferocious crackdown on dissenting students of Jamia and Aligarh Muslim University during the anti-CAA row haunt thousands of families even today as we wait for those responsible to be held accountable for the heinous misuse of power against peaceful demonstrators. And while the cases drag on in courts, the offenders would never be put on trial or would have been moved out of the public eye to other posts. Simply because the police has been reduced to being a malleable tool of the powers that be and is increasingly being used to serve their political will and agenda. Over the last few years, rarely have errant cops been held accountable for overreaching their powers, especially in cases with a decidedly communal tilt, like those involving protesters against the new citizenship law. In the Mumbai of the 80s and even later, "encounter specialists" were treated as heroes of the forces for delivering instant justice and were even endorsed by civil society. And while we may flood social media championing the cause of Black lives and the unjustness of a racist police system condoned by White supremacists, at home we are equally guilty of being ivory-tower trapped ourselves. We may rave and rant but never get out on the streets. Hence there is no pressure from civil society.

The onus is now on the Palaniswami-led AIADMK Government to bring the killers of Jayaraj and Fenix to justice. Neither a CBI probe nor suspensions and transfers are enough. The family of the deceased is demanding the perpetrators be charged with murder. The main Opposition party in Tamil Nadu, the DMK, too, is escalating the demand for swift justice. But this has to be more than just political profiteering from a tragedy that has left a family bereft of its breadwinners. The chargesheeting of the four police officers in the George Floyd case should act as an example for law enforcement officers all around the globe that along with the people they have sworn to protect, they, too, themselves are not above the law. Sadly, for all the recommendations on police reforms and the Supreme Court's directive to set up police complaint authorities at the State and district level, compliance is a far cry. Till we as a society demand a rule of law over rule of force, such transgressions will continue and we will remain in a colonial trap that the police system has perpetuated.

Liverpool on top

With Jürgen Klopp as a dogged and patient coach, the team that became Premier League champion after 30 years won't stop



It has never been an easy win for Liverpool. Back in 2005, it miraculously pulled off one of football's greatest knocks to beat AC Milan in the Champions League final. Then in 2014, when at the cusp of victory, an infamous slip effectively cost the Reds a first league title for 24 years. This season, too, its victory as the Premier League champion, coming as it does after a span of 30 years, has not been a cakewalk with the Corona pandemic throwing the game totally out of gear. Yet, Team Red has played exceptionally well, becoming an example of how a process-oriented teamwork ends up producing results, even if it takes a bit long coming. And if Liverpool peaked, remember that it has been on the ascendant the last two seasons as well. It had consecutively won 18 games and with the present win, it is left with seven more rounds which may help it rack up 107 points, thus adding another new record.

Much of the credit has to be given where it is due, to German team manager Jürgen Klopp, who took charge of the team in 2015 with the promise to turn doubters into believers. Given the string of failed coaches before him, nobody expected miracles or continuity. But rather than going for big wins, he began with consistency of performances. His entire focus has been on team efforts with the development of a squad that would trust the talent and skill of all players and not just rely on star value alone. He was against spending big on prized names, rather he chose those who would fit into his gameplan. Team members, too, believed in him and developed a telepathic understanding among themselves. Most importantly, he managed to connect the passion of the team's diehard supporters with that of the players. And he developed a formidable asset called defence. An equal contribution has come from captain Jordan Henderson, who though criticised for not having the characteristics demanded by his job, was entrusted as a leader on field. And he proved himself. He read the game well, maintained a cool head, encouraged his teammates, thus setting an example for other superstars to follow. With the present win, Liverpool's search for the elusive title has come to an end and also the much-circulated joke in football circles that for Team Red, the next year would always be "their year." This year is definitely theirs and who knows, the next year, too, maybe theirs again.

Chinese art of deceit

The rise and assertion of China is undeniable but it is also losing its crucial 'soft power' in the bargain. Nations must get together to call its bluff



BHOPINDER SINGH

The Chinese management of its narrative has been exceptionally crafted and has seen unprecedented levels of intra-coordination within different layers of governance. This was possible because it is a one-party State. The seemingly seamless integration of its economic, diplomatic, military, strategic and psychological imperatives into the making of the Chinese juggernaut has fructified the patience alluded to by Deng Xiaoping when he said, "Hide your strengths, bide your time." China's transformation from being a predominantly agrarian nation with a bloated and antiquated People's Liberation Army (PLA) to that of the world's second-largest economy with ocean-roaming nuclear submarines, intercontinental ballistic missiles, stealth bombers and cyber-capabilities has been astonishing.

With a slew of geo-strategic initiatives (for example, the Belt and Road Initiative and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor among others), Beijing is easing its purse-strings to debt-trap other nations. It is also carefully calibrating limited military engagements (for example, challenging US Navy capability in the South China Sea or the recent Galwan Valley face-off with India). China has been asserting its expansionist and hegemonic instincts. Behind this ruthless clarity of thought and action are "cultural" and "political" reflexivities that define its nonlinearity of action. China can simultaneously charm, buy out, intimidate or coerce others towards its end. Such behaviour is extremely difficult to read as it deploys and postures asymmetric stances that are predicated on deceit.

Between 2014 and 2018, over 70 per cent of Beijing's arms imports came from Russia, which sold its state-of-the-art SU-35 fighter jets and S-400 anti-aircraft systems, only to see its technology brazenly ripped and reverse engineered, in line with China's patented theft of technology. The Russian state-owned conglomerate Rostec's chief of intellectual property was left fuming: "China alone has copied aircraft engines, Sukhoi planes, deck jets, air defence systems, portable air defence missiles and analogues of the Pantsir medium-range surface-to-air systems." But nothing came out as cash-strapped Russians recognised the price of doing business with China.

Further, the US military and its suppliers have been "under cyber siege" for long as Beijing relentlessly seeks to build its military capabilities by stealing and hacking into critical military information, all this without having to fire a single shot. Besides espionage, this Chinese cyberwarfare infrastructure and capability are used for intimidation, and cause deadly disruptions that can create havoc in civic and political realms. Recently, when Australian



Prime Minister Scott Morrison lamented that a "sophisticated State-based cyber actor" was trying to hack all levels of Government, personal, business and infrastructure-related information, the finger was unmistakably pointed towards China. It is owing to such fears that the US, Australia and NATO countries are putting barriers and blocking the Chinese conglomerate, Huawei, from developing the 5G network. The intermingling and cross-ownership of industry makes them suspect all Chinese conglomerates in order to realise the goal of "Chinese century" through any means possible.

However, it is China's unapologetic and amoral realpolitik in international diplomacy that stuns and shocks the opponents, who consistently fail to understand the deceit levels born of Chinese ambitions. Be it the Nehruvian naivety of *Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai* (India and China are brothers) or the brazen bailout afforded to an international terrorist like Masood Azhar on "technical" grounds at the UN or the most recent backstabbing in the Galwan Valley — the Chinese have always reneged on their word. Chairman Mao had once explained the Chinese aphorism "to seize someone's pigtail" and then added that in the Sino-India dimension they "do not seize each other's pigtail. We are not on the alert against each other." This was said just before 1962. China patronises roguish nations like Pakistan

“ IN THE CHINESE MANUAL OF PRACTICALITY, THERE IS NO CONTRADICTION IN BEING THE ALL-WEATHER FRIEND OF PAKISTAN, AN AVOEWLY ISLAMIC COUNTRY, WHILE IT IS A COMMUNIST COUNTRY AS LONG AS THE ENDS JUSTIFY THE MEANS ”

and North Korea and turns them into vassal States. In the Chinese manual of practicality, there is no contradiction in being the "all-weather friend" of Pakistan, an avowedly "Islamic" country, while it is a "communist" country as long as the ends justify the means. Even domestically, it is the deceitful commitment towards its "one country, two systems" principle that defines Hong Kong's concerns as China goes about surreptitiously dissolving the political-social-cultural boundaries with its project of "Mainlandisation", akin to Tibet earlier and one that haunts Taiwan always.

It is said that unlike the Western notions of war and diplomacy, which are essentially based on overwhelming force and technology, the Chinese are masters of strategy and stratagems. It has produced military classics like Sun Tzu's *Art of War* and has institutionalised strategic tenets like *yingyizha li* (war is deception), *sheng-dong ji-xi* (point to the east but attack the west), *shang-bing fa-mou* (critical to attack enemy's strategy), *chu-qi zhi-sheng* (win by doing the abnormal), *bishi ji-xu* (attack the enemy's weakest point and stay clear of its strengths), *yi-yuwei-zhi* (take the most devious route to surprise and overcome), *yin-di zhi-sheng* (emerge victorious by changing the tactics according to the situation, don't be fixated), *yi-rouke-gang* (against the hard, be soft and gentle to win), *hou-fa zhi-ren* (retaliate and

go up on the enemy after it has started the fracas) and such dialectics that underline and reflect Chinese actions.

Unlike the US or India, not only does China have a "strategic culture" but it also incorporates the same in its State functioning with the additional advantage of being able to deploy diplomacy, commerce, military and psychological wherewithal in perfect unison. It remains impossible to decipher and it exploits the "strategic configuration of power" unabashedly and confidently.

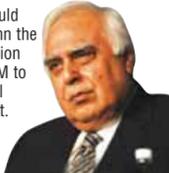
Therefore, for all its militaristic posturing, China has not taken on any resource-draining commitments in the global conflict, for example, the Middle East, and bides its time as the West slowly burns and exhausts its resources and enthusiasm. The rise and assertion of China is undeniable but it is also losing its crucial "soft power" in the bargain as the COVID-19 world licks its wounds at the utterly deceitful Chinese ways of "managing" the same. The littoral States surrounding the South China Sea, Japan, Taiwan, India, Australia and the Western world are realising that they have been truly outsmarted through deceit, more than once by a hawkish China. Only in this honest realisation lies the future recourse of calling and mitigating all future bluffs of Chinese deceit.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands)

SOUNDBITE

The Prime Minister should openly, publicly condemn the brazen Chinese occupation in Ladakh. I want the PM to condemn China. We will support the Government.

Congress leader —Kapil Sibal



I don't like these terms 'new normal'. It's there until the time we find a vaccine to tackle the issue. We'll go back to normal, I believe.

Actor —Radhika Apte



I believe that the dead have been treated with the highest respect in the military, and that the information will eventually be reported to society at the right time.

Chinese Ambassador —Sun Weidong



While making these allegations, one should also look at what had happened in the past. This is an issue of national interest and one should not bring in politics here.

NCP chief —Sharad Pawar



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shameful incident

Sir — The death of a father-son duo in Tamil Nadu's Tuticorin, while they were in judicial custody, is distressing. The Tamil Nadu police acted in the most inhuman manner. There can be no justification for the alleged police brutality. While it is true that the accused had violated lockdown rules, the police officials have exceeded their brief. Their offence definitely didn't warrant such a treatment. The police should have filed an FIR and sealed the shop. The way in which they manhandled the accused suggests that they had a personal score to settle. It was sheer abuse of power.

Following the brutal attack, the two officials were transferred. But would that bring any change in the mindset? There have been several calls for stricter punishment. The police are vested with the authority to maintain the law and order but that doesn't mean that they can take the law into their own hands.

With the matter up with the High Court, an independent agency must ensure a fair investigation. The case will remain a

India must find its own feet

This refers to the editorial, "Can Russia help?" (June 25). The Russia-India-China (RIC) is a strategic grouping that was conceived in 1998 by the Russian leadership not only to stand up to the Western powers but to also renew old relationships with India and foster the new-fangled friendship with China. A virtual ministerial-level meeting of the RIC was held on June 23. Despite the fast-spreading COVID-19 pandemic, India decided to go ahead with the meet. For us, the RIC came as an opportunity to de-escalate tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) where China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) ambushed and killed 20 of our soldiers. In actual terms, the meeting turned out to be a damp squib when China indulged in its trademark Orwellian doublespeak and doublethink. Russia, too, couldn't go beyond the lip-service of "constructive dialogue," leaving India high and dry. Russia can annoy neither India nor China as its strategic interests are deeply linked to both. So, India should stop having illusions of Russia ever coming to our side against China. In fact, RIC had inspired similar formations like BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). All such multilateral outfits are subservient to China's economic and geopolitical interests.



Time India wriggles out of its paralytic China policy and looks for friends in other geographical areas. We should also engage more with formulations such as the Quad to contain China's rise in the Indo-Pacific region. The US President's call to expand the G-7 by including India, Australia and South Korea is welcome. In fact, none of the members is opposed to the inclusion of the three new members to the grouping. India must remove its China blinkers and leverage the Quad and the newly-proposed G-10 against rowdy China.

SK Prahakar Gurugram

Battle continues

Sir — Hindustan Unilever's announcement that it would drop terms such as "fair/fairness," "white/whitening" and

"light/lightening" from its iconic skin-care brand Fair & Lovely is welcome. Ironically though, the change came only when the firm was threatened with punitive action, possible lawsuits and a global movement. As a matter of

black mark in the annals of police history. This incident must lead to the issuance of norms for policemen to handle lockdown violations.

VS Jayaraman Chennai

fact, such creams are popular across South Asia where complexionism is rampant. The renaming of a face cream may not uproot the deep-seated prejudices, which have been entrenched by such companies who sell fairness creams.

Shankar Singh Via email

Awareness is the key

Sir — It is unfortunate that over one hundred people died when struck by lightning in north and Northeast India. During monsoon, lightning strikes are common. People need to be made aware of this aspect and to adopt safety measures to prevent loss of life. We should not rush for shelter below trees, where lightning strike is severe. If caught in an open area, one should sit crouching down with feet together and head tucked in over the knees. Such tips should be passed on to all by the local administration, especially in rural, isolated and remote areas.

Subhash Vaid Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

UP shows the way

The Migrant Commission announced by the UP Govt will not only pull the State out of poverty, it will also restore dignity to the now jobless workers



GUNJA KAPOOR

India's largest State, Uttar Pradesh (UP), has lurched from crisis to crisis since its inception. Be it law and order, social fault lines or weak socio-economic variables like healthcare, education, infrastructure, income or occupation, UP has been a constant laggard. This triggered high levels of migration for economic reasons. A significant number of migrant workers used to send remittances to UP and also created assets in their home towns. After the countrywide lockdown was implemented on March 25, migrants who were involved in odd jobs or were micro-entrepreneurs and drove cabs or ironed clothes scrambled to return home. With broken income streams and prolonged uncertainty, common sense suggested that the best way to brave the crisis was to be with one's family and community and over 31 lakh workers returned to the State.

As migrants returned home, so did stories of horror, despair, exploitation and violation of human rights by employers. Against the backdrop of these heart-wrenching stories of abuse, it was announced that a Migrant Commission would be set up in the State to protect the rights and socio-economic welfare of the migrant population. If implemented in action and spirit by the Yogi Adityanath-led UP Government, the Migrant Commission will not only pull the State out of poverty, it will also restore dignity to the now jobless workforce. As of now, barring those below 18 years of age, the skill mapping of 30.47 lakh workers and labourers has been completed in the State and the Government has expressed confidence that under the Atm Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rozgar Abhiyan, more than 1.25 crore workers would be provided jobs either in various industries or through self-employment.

Social security: Until UP can provide jobs to its workers, it needs to ensure that all documented migrants and their families have adequate access to social welfare schemes, including Ayushman Bharat, Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana. Micro-entrepreneurs should be encouraged to avail MUDRA loans. It is disturbing to see first-time migrants compromise on wages and working conditions due to lack of social security or community support. Left in the lurch, their mental and physical well-being stands bruised.

Affordable housing: As part of the recent economic reforms, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced that affordable rented housing facilities would be provided in cities. The Migration Commission should take this opportunity to construct multiple housing societies for independent and shared accommodation for migrants in these cities and charge affordable rent. These housing facilities can ensure migrants are not fleeced by landlords in big cities and they lead a life of dignity. A lot of times, those in dire need of money end up working overtime, get into the wrong company or don't pay enough attention to their diet and health because they simply cannot afford to do that. Hence, the Migrant Commission should appoint officers on deputation in these cities, to monitor and safeguard the interests of migrant workers. In cases where the families of migrant workers stay back at home, their time can be used efficiently by actively registering them for skill development programmes and monitoring the academic progress of their children.

Economic security: As mentioned above, perversion in contracts to take advantage of the migrants is rampant. The Migration Commission needs to ensure that all migrant workers receive nothing less than the floor wage recommended by the Labour Ministry for that geographical area. The Labour Commission will be able to monitor if the wages are aligned with prevalent market rates. This is imperative for economic empowerment of the migrant workers. In order to secure the future of migrants, a pension fund by the State, whereby the migrants contribute a minimum amount for their future, should be set up. The Labour Commission representatives appointed in these cities will have the mandate to conduct market surveys for skill requirements, collect feedback from employers and work as a human resource manager for migrants. By keeping a record of skills of the migrant workers, they can be appraised of upcoming opportunities in other cities or even their own State.

The biggest advantage of this model will be an increase in formalisation of employment and eventually a comprehensive database of workforce and participation rate in India. An immediate risk of this model is that it may face resistance if other States do not provide their vulnerable migrant workforce a definite support system, employers may be resistant to follow the stringent mechanisms and end up not hiring workers from UP.

To some, the Migrant Commission may seem like a legislative overreach and hyper-governance. Unfortunately, the challenge is not just about reaching a supply-demand imbalance where the shortage of skilled and unskilled workforce in certain parts of the country can be met through the surplus in UP. The supply has not placed UP at an advantage; instead it has only given opportunities for informal employers and recruitment agents to indulge in trafficking and access cheap labour.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based public policy analyst)

PM HAS SURRENDERED INDIAN TERRITORY TO CHINESE AGGRESSION. IF THE LAND WAS CHINESE WHY WERE OUR SOLDIERS KILLED? WHERE WERE THEY KILLED?

—CONGRESS LEADER
RAHUL GANDHI

POINT COUNTERPOINT



WE CAN'T FORGET WHAT HAPPENED IN 1962 WHEN CHINA OCCUPIED 45,000 SQ KM OF INDIA'S TERRITORY. ONE MUST LOOK AT WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST.

—NATIONALIST CONGRESS PARTY PRESIDENT
SHARAD PAWAR

A beacon of hope

Changes at the individual, household and community level have accompanied the economic impact of the Self-Help Groups in Maharashtra's Wanoja village



MOIN QAZI

Wanoja is a small township in the Chandrapur district of Maharashtra. It is best known for the small village republic the great humanist Baba Amte set up for disabled people alienated by mainstream society. The most vulnerable among these are leprosy patients who still suffer from social stigma but find love and dignity in this wonderful village named Anandwan, a forest of bliss.

One of the closest villages to the town is Wanoja, a hamlet of 300 families. Twenty five years ago, it was a bootlegger's paradise with unruly men stumbling about in a drunken stupor. Today, as we battle COVID-19, this village stands out as a model of resilience. The spirit behind this collective determination is sarpanch Nirmala Gaghate, who symbolises the multiple roles women play in a crisis like a pandemic. Primarily as caregivers, women are not just sustaining families but also serving as front-line responders, mainly in the health and service sector of the country, even in rural India.

During my early career in the State Bank of India (SBI), I was posted as manager of the local branch. I also happened to be piloting the self-help group (SHG) movement. One of the first villages that we chose for our pilot project was Wanoja.

Nirmala was a shy woman and there was nothing outstanding about her that could qualify her for a leadership role. But I was impressed by her simplicity and honesty and offered her the role of SBI's ambassador for the SHG movement in her village. Nirmala was taken aback and asked me why I chose her. I told her that everybody in the village had vouched for her. Nirmala hesitated for several days but finally yielded to our gentle and persuasive prodding. What tipped the scales in our favour was that her mother-in-law was quite supportive and promised to relieve her of a number of household chores. Nirmala convinced neighbouring women to band together and the first SHG was born in the village. It was christened Savitribai Phule Bachat Gat, appropriately named after rural India's pioneering woman reformer. All women in the SHG, barring Nirmala, were unlettered. Nirmala persevered hard to teach her group members the nuts and bolts of managing the group. Every time she visited the bank, she made one woman accompany her by rotation so that they could observe how a bank worked. In the end, these women started transacting business at the bank independently.

Nirmala's hard work paid off and the group prospered. This had a multiplier effect in the entire village as several more SHGs emerged. As the SHGs' focus was more on collective enterprise, the number of businesses the women have set up in this long journey include a retail agency for farm inputs. The most recent success story is the Government support that has enabled each SHG member to set up an independent poultry unit. There are now around 300 poultry units with the chicks, poultry feed and shed, all funded by the Government.

In the process of mapping out her SHG's trajectory and navigating murky village politics, Nirmala was drawn into electoral politics. Panchayat Raj was already beckoning women to join governance and she couldn't remain insulated from political currents, much as she tried to avoid them. She represented her ward for two terms and finally became the village sarpanch,

“THE COVID-19 AND THE LOCKDOWN HAVE MADE LITTLE DIFFERENCE TO LIFE IN WANOJA VILLAGE. THE VILLAGE HEAD ENSURED THAT SOCIAL DISTANCING AND OTHER MANDATORY LOCKDOWN INSTRUCTIONS WERE METICULOUSLY PRACTISED AND ALL THE ENTRY AND EXIT POINTS TO THE VILLAGE WERE SEALED. NIRMALA FORMED TEAMS TO PROTECT HER VILLAGE FROM COVID-19. SHE IS ENSURING ACCESS TO ACCURATE INFORMATION TO KEEP THE SHGs, THE WOMEN, THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES SAFE”



Nirmala Gaghate

a post she has been holding for the last five years. As the elected village head, she oversees the administration of public services. There is 100 per cent literacy in the village now and all boys and girls attend college. No men drink now and there is total prohibition. The village has a very good recreation park for the children.

All houses have indoor toilets and piped water supply. They get filtered drinking water from a plant installed by a power generation company under its CSR initiative. The firm has also set up a medical centre manned by a qualified medical team. The village is periodically disinfected by the company. The sarpanch has made sure that the donors get enough value from their investment and has provided prominent visibility and branding to their work so that they are able to enhance their social bottom line.

Women's leadership in agriculture is increasingly being recognised as a key to tackling climate change. They are playing a strong role in adapting new technology, spreading information and urging action. They have taken advantage of a slew of agricultural initiatives in the last few years that have focussed on aiding marginalised communities and women farmers.

The COVID-19 and the lockdown have made little difference to life in Wanoja village. The village head ensured that social distancing and other mandatory lockdown instructions were meticulously practised and all the entry and exit points to the village were sealed. As the sarpanch, Nirmala formed teams to protect her village from COVID-19. She is ensuring access to accurate information to keep the SHGs, the women, their families and their communities safe. These efforts include essential guidance

on preventive measures such as social distancing, hand washing as well as how to identify symptoms of the disease. She has also made sure that all the promised Government relief reaches every family.

Reflecting on the success of the SHGs in the village as also the progress made by the gram panchayat, Nirmala says the women of her village never thought they would pull the "cart" so far. She is happy in her role as the "cart puller" and envisions a prosperous future for her village. The first SHG, which began with a monthly contribution of ₹20 from each member, has now increased the amount to ₹200, an indication of the increased income and saving capacity of the women.

Changes at the individual, household and community level have accompanied the economic impact of the SHGs. Participating in group meetings has provided women with new opportunities and experiences. They have also become confident in dealing with public officials and authority figures.

The most perceptible change for the women at the household level is the men's attitudes towards housework. In the past, women had few income-earning opportunities and were mainly engaged in housework. Their husbands gave them little or no assistance in this work. Now, because of the success of the SHGs, the tension between remunerative work and housework has been resolved by men sharing some household responsibilities.

Women of the village are getting increased recognition as the breadwinners and this is substantially altering the family relationships at the grass-roots level. To the women, their involvement in SHGs results in fewer "problems" with their husbands. Women, as they say, are now granted

more respect and authority within the family unit, reflecting positively on intra-household relationships between the sexes. Aware of the benefits derived from their exposure, village women are increasingly articulating their interest in broadening their knowledge by travelling outside the immediate village environment.

The success story of Wanoja's SHGs and its women underscores the importance of giving poor people access to loans, savings accounts and other financial services that can support their precarious lives and businesses and enable them to reach their full potential. It can also alter the socially-constructed roles and identities of these women who live in some of the most challenging and fragile contexts. For the resilient women of Wanoja, every disaster is an opportunity to move forward. Recurrent droughts have given the women a chance to show their families that they can be leaders too.

Women have a unique vantage point for identifying trends at the local level that might signal the start of an outbreak. They are the eyes and ears of not only the medical establishment but also the administrative apparatus.

When she looks back at her own evolution, Nirmala is grateful for having achieved a satisfactory level of well-being for her family and the community. The women of the SHGs say they are now able to assert their right to be heard and to have their opinions taken seriously. Over the years, some gains will undoubtedly be reversed; others will be resilient to reversals. Women like the ones in Wanoja provide us shiny silver glimmers of hope as we battle COVID-19.

(The writer is a well-known development professional)

US Muslims and the politics of identity

Instead of finding roots in Pakistan, the second generation was handed explanations in this context by Islamist evangelical outfits that mushroomed in the US



NADEEM PARACHA

While watching TV footage of the recent race riots in the US, I recognised one of the many African American protesters being arrested in Washington DC. The protester was Ahmad Farooq, whom I had met in 2018 when he approached me after a talk I had delivered at the International Forum for Democratic Studies, where I was stationed as a Research Fellow.

After the talk, Ahmad invited me for coffee. All I knew about him was that he lived in Virginia and was a retired college professor. A week later, while visiting the area for something

entirely different, I decided to visit Ahmad. We met at a bar just behind his office and had lunch there. Ahmad told me that his ancestors were some of the first Muslims to come to the US, over 500 years ago. This wasn't some fancy talk. In her 1998 book, *Servants of Allah*, American historian Sylviane Diouf writes that among the first batches of African slaves brought to the US by Europeans in the early 17th century, were many Muslims. But according to historian Sam Haselby, a former faculty member of the American University of Beirut, there was, in fact, a Muslim presence in the US even before European Puritans set up their first colony in the region in 1607. In an essay for the May 2019 issue of *Aeon*, Haselby writes that Muslims regularly arrived in the Americas with Spanish expeditions in the 15th and 16th centuries, sometimes as slaves and sometimes even as advisers.

A majority of them were from Granada, a Muslim stronghold in Europe before it was overthrown by the

Spanish in the 15th century.

According to Diouf, the majority of African slaves brought to the US, especially during the cotton boom in the 18th and 19th centuries, followed traditional African religions and many were also Muslim. Both Diouf and Haselby write that a large number of them converted to Christianity and those who didn't, managed to remain Muslim. According to the *Encyclopedia of American Religious History*, there were no mosques in the US until 1921.

Ahmad told me that his ancestors belonged to Senegal in Africa and arrived in South America as slaves in the late 16th century on a Spanish ship. They escaped and reached Mexico, from where they moved to what became Arizona in the US.

The history of South-Asian Muslims in the US is equally interesting. Professor of Religious Studies Kathleen Moore writes that the first Muslims from South Asia arrived in the US in the late 19th century. They were all from areas constituting present-day

Pakistani and Indian Punjabs.

According to Moore, these early immigrants from South Asia were mostly Sikhs, but some among them were also Muslims and Hindus. However, Moore adds that they were all clubbed as Hindus by the Americans who believed they followed the same faith. They largely worked as hired hands in agriculture and factories. Around 6,000 such South Asians migrated to the US between the late 19th century and 1917, when the US Congress placed restrictions on migrations from India. In 1923, the US Supreme Court declared that Indian migrants were not eligible for US citizenship because they were not White. Moore writes that since they continued being called Hindu and faced racial attacks, some moved the courts to plead that they were descendants of ancient Aryans, and therefore should be treated as Whites. The ploy did not work. Restrictions on immigration from South Asia were lifted in 1946. From 1947 onward, a majority of

South-Asian Muslims in the US arrived from Pakistan. According to Moore, approximately 1,800 Pakistanis migrated to the US between 1947 and 1965. Almost all of them were men. And since they were unable to bring wives and children with them, many married Latin-American women in the US. When US immigration laws were further relaxed in 1965, the number of Pakistani migrants there increased manifold. These also included young Pakistani men and women interested in higher education in American universities and colleges. According to Moore, these first groups of Pakistani migrants did not exhibit any outward displays of their faith and quickly adopted "the American way of life."

However, things in this context began to gradually change from the early 1980s. Palestinian Professor Bishara Khader writes that one of the factors that instilled a greater role of religion in the lives of Muslims in Europe was the fact that more and more Muslim migrants began to

acquire wives from home. When the wives arrived in Europe and had children there, both parents began to adopt religiosity, especially when their children entered their teens. They felt this would help them keep a check on their children growing up in "permissive" societies. A similar thing happened in the US.

Moore writes that even though the first groups of Pakistani migrants were not very demonstrative about their faith and had either become entirely Westernised or placed more emphasis on their ethnic customs and cultures, the last batch of this generation of migrants became conservative when their children reached school-going age. Impacted by the growth of the "politics of identity" in the US, the children grew up looking for their roots. But instead of finding these roots in Pakistan, as such, the children were actually handed explanations in this context by Islamist evangelical outfits that mushroomed in the US, especially from the 1980s onwards.

Another factor behind the transformation was when the American Government adopted the idea of multiculturalism in the 1990s. This meant that a group could exist with its own cultural ethos within a larger meta-culture, without fully integrating. So the question of identity, Islamic evangelism and multiculturalism combined, especially in the post-9/11 scenario, for second generation Pakistani migrants, who began to signal their identity through Islamic symbols.

This actually played out during my lunch with Ahmad. Later he informed me that the bar we were in was started by a Pakistani named Humayun. He had migrated to the US in the 1960s, and started the bar in the early 1970s. In the mid-1980s, he suddenly sold the bar because of "community pressure." So what happened to Humayun? "No, he didn't end up in Afghanistan. He's still here in Virginia. But I don't think his children know that daddy once owned a bar", Ahmad smiled.

(Courtesy: Dawn)

US cases top 2.5mn, reopenings paused

Washington: The number of Covid-19 cases in the US has surged to over 2.5 million, as the country witnessed a recent uptick in the number of infections, prompting many states to consider reopening their economies and to impose stricter restrictions to curb the virus spread.

As of Sunday morning, the overall number of confirmed COVID-19 cases stood at 2,510,092, while the death toll increased to 125,539, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

The tallies currently account for the world's highest both in terms of cases and fatalities.

More than 42,000 new cases were reported nationwide as of Saturday, the second day in a row that the daily increase has surged to above 40,000, Xinhua news agency quoted.

The states of Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Texas and Washington have either rolled back or paused their reopening plans due to a sudden spike in the number of cases.

On Saturday, Washington state Governor Jay Inslee announced the suspension of



counties looking to move into the Phase 4 of reopening due to an increase in the number of new COVID-19 cases.

"We all want to get back to doing all the things we love in Washington during the summer, and fully open our economy, but we aren't there yet," Inslee said in a statement.

"This is an evolving situation and we will continue to make decisions based on the data."

Washington is taking a phased approach to reopening, allowing some counties to

reopen before others.

Phase 4 would resume recreational activities and allow for gatherings of more than 50 people, according to the state's "Safe Start" plan.

For the third time in the four days, Florida set a new daily record for novel coronavirus cases with more than 9,500 confirmed on Saturday.

The 9,585 new COVID-19 cases brought the state's total to 132,545, according to figures released by the Florida Department of Health.

The Department of Health

Services of Arizona reported 3,591 new cases Saturday morning, pushing the tally in the western state to 70,051.

The new lab-confirmed cases number, which jumped by 5.4 per cent from the previous 24 hours, exposed part of the worrisome landscape that Arizona is facing to contain the pandemic.

Texas also set a record for coronavirus-related hospitalizations for the 16th consecutive day on Saturday, with 5,223 patients currently being treated, reported The

As cases surge, rural areas seeing increases as well

Washington: For many states and counties in the U.S., the dark days of the coronavirus pandemic in April unfolded on their television screens, not on their doorsteps. But now, some places that appeared to have avoided the worst are seeing surges of infections, as worries shift from major cities to rural areas.

While much of the focus of concerns that the United States is entering a dangerous new phase has been on big Sunbelt states that are reporting thousands of new cases a day — like Texas and Florida — the worrying trend is also happening in places like Kansas, where livestock outnumber people.

In early June, Kansas looked

to be bringing its outbreak under control, but its daily reported case numbers have more than doubled in recent weeks. On June 5, the seven-day average for daily new cases hovered at around 96; by Friday, that figure was 211. As cases rise, the U.S. Army commander at Fort Riley in the state's northeast ordered his soldiers to stay out of a popular nearby restaurant and bar district after 10 p.m.

Idaho and Oklahoma have seen similarly large percentage increases over the same three-week period, albeit from low starting points. In Oklahoma, the seven-day average for daily new cases climbed from about 81 to 376; Idaho's jumped from around 40 to 160.

in the state.

But the state's COVID-19 test positivity rate has dropped to around 1 per cent, the lowest among the country's big states, according to New York Governor Andrew Cuomo.

Other states with over 100,000 cases include California, New Jersey, Illinois and Massachusetts. IANS

US envoy calls for Iran arms embargo renewal

Dubai: An expiring United Nations weapons embargo on Iran must remain in place to prevent it from "becoming the arms dealer of choice for rogue regimes and terrorist organizations around the world," the US special representative to Iran said Sunday.

Brian Hook told The Associated Press that the world should ignore Iran's threats to retaliate if the arms embargo set to expire in October is extended, calling it a "mafia tactic." Among its options, the Islamic Republic could expel international inspectors monitoring Iran's nuclear program, deepening a crisis created by President Trump unilaterally withdrawing from Tehran's 2015 atomic accord with global powers.

The UN arms embargo so far has stopped Iran from purchasing fighter jets, tanks, warships and other weaponry, but has failed to halt its smuggling of weapons into war zones. Despite that, Hook argued both an import and export ban on Tehran must remain in place to secure the wider Mideast. "If we let it expire, you can

be certain that what Iran has been doing in the dark, it will do in broad daylight and then some," Hook said. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Hook's remarks. Hook made the comments while on a visit to Abu Dhabi, the capital of the US-allied United Arab Emirates, as part of a Mideast tour. Hook met Saturday with Emirati Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and planned Sunday to meet with other officials. Hook declined to say where else he would travel on his trip.

Hook spoke to AP journalists in Dubai via videoconference as Abu Dhabi's borders remain closed to the UAE's six other sheikhdoms over the coronavirus pandemic. The United Nations banned Iran from buying major foreign weapon systems in 2010 amid tensions over its nuclear program. That blocked Iran from replacing its aging equipment, much of which had been purchased by the shah before the 1979 Islamic Revolution. An earlier embargo targeted Iranian arms exports. AP

Virus spreads to all 77 districts of Nepal, total cases reach 12,772

Kathmandu: The coronavirus infection has spread to all the 77 districts in Nepal with the detection of 463 new COVID-19 cases in the country, the health ministry said on Sunday.

The deadly virus has so far claimed 28 lives in Nepal, health ministry spokesperson Jageshwar Gautam said at his daily press briefing.

With the detection of 463 new coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, the total tally now stands at 12,772, he said. The

coronavirus has now spread to all the 77 districts in the country, the ministry said. As many as 179 coronavirus patients, including 13 women, were discharged from hospitals, taking the total number of recoveries to 3,013. As on Sunday, 9,731 COVID-19 patients were undergoing treatment at different health facilities across Nepal. Health authorities have so far conducted 2,15,839 coronavirus tests, including 4,962 in the last 24 hours, the ministry said. PTI

UK plans localised lockdowns as virus deaths among Indian-origin people remain high

London: The UK government on Sunday said it is planning to impose localised lockdowns in some regions showing a spike in coronavirus infections, as latest figures showed that Indian-origin people remain in the category of those hardest hit from the deadly virus among Britain's ethnic minorities.

Home Secretary Priti Patel confirmed as "correct" the reports of the first such local lockdown for Leicester, a region

in eastern England with a large Indian-origin population.

"We have seen flare-ups across the country already, just in the last three or four weeks in particular. There will be support going into Leicester," said Patel.

"With local flare-ups it is right we have a localised solution in terms of infection control, social distancing, testing and many of the tools actually within the Public Health England space that will come

together to control the virus and to stop the spread so we can get on top of the infection," she said.

Patel's confirmation came as England has seen an overall fall in the daily death toll and prepares to substantially lift its lockdown restrictions from July 4, when bars, restaurants and cinemas will begin to open up to public access amid Covid-secure guidelines of safe distancing and hygienic conditions. PTI

China reviews heavily criticised Hong Kong national security bill

Beijing: China's legislature on Sunday began reviewing a controversial national security bill for Hong Kong that critics worldwide say will severely compromise human rights in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

The National People's Congress Standing Committee took up the matter at the start of a three-day session, China's official Xinhua News Agency reported. China has said it is determined to enact the law, and its passage is expected by Tuesday.

The US says it will respond by ending favorable trading terms granted to the former British colony after it passed to Chinese control in 1997. The Senate on Thursday unanimously approved a bill to impose sanctions on businesses and individuals — including the police — that undermine Hong Kong's autonomy or restrict freedoms promised to the city's residents.

The Senate bill targets police units that have cracked down on Hong Kong protesters, as well as Chinese Communist Party officials responsible for imposing the national security law. The measure also would impose sanctions on banks that do business with entities found to violate the law.

Last week, a former United Nations human rights chief and eight former UN special envoys urged the body's secretary-general to appoint a special envoy on Hong Kong over what they said is a pending "humanitarian tragedy."

Britain has said it would grant passports to as many as 3 million of Hong Kong's 7.8 million people.

Beijing has denounced all such moves as gross interference in its internal affairs.

The law would criminalize secession, subversion of state power, terrorist activities and colluding with foreign forces to endanger national security.

Critics say Hong Kong's legal statutes already account for such matters and that Beijing is determined to use the law to pursue political opponents.

The central government in Beijing also would set up a national security office in Hong Kong to collect and analyze intelligence and deal with criminal cases related to national security.

Few details have been released, but it appears that Beijing will have ultimate power over government appointments, further reducing the relative independence it promised to Hong Kong in a 1984 joint declaration with Britain that is considered an international treaty. The measures have been widely seen as the most significant erosion to date of Hong Kong's British-style rule of law and high degree of autonomy that China promised Hong Kong would have under a "one country, two systems" principle. AP

DHFL National Office Address : Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited Plot No-6, Block A, Sector-2, Noida, U.P. 201301 Mobile: 9599945057 | Email: shruti_baid@dhfl.com

Branch Address : Dhiraj Bag, Building 'A' Ground & 1st Floor, Beside Axis Bank, Opp. Monalisa Building, Agr Road, Hari Niwas Circle, Napauda, Phase (West) 40602.

DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd.(DHFL) Under Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to DHFL, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to DHFL by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) (bahadurGants Limited/Ahujal(borrower Name)/suparna Ahuja(borrower name1)	Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date	Description of secured asset (immovable property)	Date of Possession
(Loan Code No. 00000445) (bahadurGants Limited/Ahujal(borrower Name)/suparna Ahuja(borrower name1)	31-07-2019 for Rs.18786675/- (One Crore Eighty Seven Lac Eighty Six Thousand Six Hundred Seventy Five Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Plot No-136, Third Floor Ambika Vihar Paschim Vihar Delhi West Midnapore Delhi 110087	23-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00001900) (greater Noida), Karm Vir Gulia(borrower Name)/anila Gulia(borrower Name1)	28-08-2019 for Rs.25711564/- (Two Core Fifty Seven Lac Eleven Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Four Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Kharsa 2658 Shop No-1 Ashok Vihar Phase-II Gurgaon Gurgaon Haryana 122001	24-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00000965) (noida 1 Rajendra Place), Shaloo Gupta(borrower Name)/ninin Gupta(coborrower_name1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.7657291/- (Seventy Six Lac Fifty Seven Thousand Two Hundred Ninety One Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Unit No. 2103 Floor 20th lower O Amrapali Heartbeat City 2 Plot No. Gh-1d Sector-107,Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	25-06-2020
(LOAN CODE No. 00000966) (Noida 1 Rajendra Place), Nitin Gupta(BORROWER NAME)/Bgs Fashions Pvt Ltd (COBORROWER_NAME1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.7721923/- (Seventy Seven Lac Twenty One Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Three Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Unit No. 2003 Floor 20th Tower O Amrapali Heartbeat City 2 Plot No. Gh-1d Sector-107,Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	24-06-2020
(LOAN CODE No. 00004448) (Gurgaon 1) Rashmi Chaudhary(borrower Name)/Manoj Chandhok(COBORROWER_NAME1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.7552409/- (Seventy Five Lac Fifty Two Thousand Four Hundred Nine Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Unit No.12a03, 12a1 13th Floor Tower 4 The Aranya (Aranya Heights) Plot No. Gh 02 Sec119,Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	25-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00004063) (Gurgaon) Anita Jaggi (borrower Name)/Jaggi Dharmesh(coborrower_name1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.8233766/- (Eighty Two Lac Thirty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Three Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Flat No. 12a03 12a Floor (As Per Docs) 13th Floor Physically Tower No T 5 Plot No Gh 02 Sector 119, The Aranya Heights Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	25-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00001226) (rohini), Neeraj Chaudhary(borrower Name)/Monia Chaudhary(coborrower_name1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.17403967/- (One Core Seventy Four Lac Three Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Seven Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Flat No. Bp-2, 16th Floor Block-B, Amrapali Silicon City Plot No. Gh-01/ Asec-76,Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	24-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00001227) (rohini), Neeraj Chaudhary(borrower Name)/monia Chaudhary(coborrower_name1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.13835170/- (One Core Thirty Eight Lac Thirty Five Thousand One Hundred Seventy Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Flat No. L-p4, 16th Floor, Block-L Amrapali Sapphire, Plot No. Gh 001 Sector-45, Near Chhalera Vill, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	23-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00001228) (rohini), Neeraj Chaudhary(borrower Name)/monia Chaudhary(coborrower_name1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.9359295/- (Ninety Three Lac Fifty Nine Thousand Two Hundred Ninety Five Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Flat No P-1201, 19th Floor, Tower P Amrapali Sapphire, Plot No. Gh 001 Sector-45, Near Chhalera Villa, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	24-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00001292) (rohini), M/s Laurent & Benon Management Consultants Private Ltd(borrower Name)/Kumar Syla(coborrower_name1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.20631135/- (Two Core Six Lac Thirty One Thousand One Hundred Thirty Five Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Apartment No A-0203 Second Floor Tower A Pilot Court Essel Hillside Gurgaon Gurgaon Haryana 122001	24-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00002845) (noida), Himanshu Kumar Verma(borrower Name)/pooja Kumari(coborrower_name1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.25041001/- (Two Core Fifty Lac Forty One Thousand One Hundred Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Plot No. 95, Avtar Enclave Paschim Vihar New Delhi New Delhi 110063	23-06-2020
(Loan Code No. Gur34908) (Gurgaon-Sohna Road), Mamta Singh(borrower Name)/coborrower_name1)	26-09-2019 for Rs.8937580/- (Eighty Nine Lac Thirty Seven Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Hillat No.VIII No B-004B, Floor No. Espace Premiere, Nirvana Country-2, Sector. 71 And T-72, Vill Age Gurgaon_gurgaon.gurgaon-122002	24-06-2020
(Loan Code No. Gur35046) (Gurgaon-Sohna Road), Bhupinder Kumar(borrower Name)/coborrower_name1)	29-10-2019 for Rs.31232677/- (Three Core Twelve Lac Thirty Two Thousand Six Hundred Seventy Seven Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Hillat No. Unit No B-88, Visionaire Homes, Sector. 70a Village Gurgaon_gurgaon.gurgaon-122001	24-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00041433) (delhi-Sadulurjng), Sooraj Kumar(borrower Name)/deepak Gonka(coborrower_name1)	19-11-2019 for Rs.24330435/- (Two Core Forty Three Lac Thirty Thousand Four Hundred Thirty Five Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Plot No. 14/3 Kachnar Marg Df Phase-1 Gurgaon Gurgaon Haryana - 122001	24-06-2020
(LOAN CODE No. 00043343) (Gurgaon-Sohna Road), Duet Sare Outsourcing Private Ltd(BORROWER NAME)/Vineet Relia(COBORROWER_NAME1)	19-11-2019 for Rs.44635170/- (Four Core Forty Six Lac Thirty Five Thousand One Hundred Seventy Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Flat No. 501 5th Floor Tower B6 The World Spa Sector 30 Gurgaon Gurgaon Haryana - 122001	24-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00004417) (New Delhi), Sanjay Kumar Gupta(borrower Name)/poonam Gupta(coborrower_name1)	19-11-2019 for Rs.27969719/- (Two Core Seventy Nine Lac Sixty Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Nineteen Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Entire Ground Floor Of Northern Side Por Ton And Hallentrance Of Fl. w-132 G.k.part-I New Delhi New Delhi 110065	24-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00002515) (Gurgaon) Focus Imaging And Research Center Pvt Ltd(BORROWER NAME)/Prashant Sarin(COBORROWER_NAME1)	19-11-2019 for Rs.43523799/- (Four Core Thirty Five Lac Sixteen Thousand Three Hundred Seventy Nine Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Kh. No. 1626 Min(1-2) & 1437(0-14) 1436 Min(5-3)1438 Min(1-18), 19691/1439min(0-3) Village-bhat, Khurd Tehsil Hauz Khas, Mehrauli Delhi New Delhi 110075	25-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00002849) (noida), M/s Sarawati Education Pvt Ltd(borrower Name)/mothers Drive Education Personna Pvt Ltd(coborrower_name1)	18-11-2019 for Rs.59616358/- (Five Core Ninety Six Lac Sixteen Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Eight Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property C-71b/And C-71f, Kharsa No.583, Khewat No. 92, Khatori No. 251,shivaji Park Shivaji Park near Punjabi Bagh Delhi New Delhi Delhi 110026	25-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00001231) (rohini), Neeraj Chaudhary(borrower Name)/Monia Chaudhary(coborrower_name1)	18-12-2019 for Rs.25900942/- (Two Core Fifty Nine Lac Nine Hundred Forty Two Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Flat No-54-A, Model Town - West G T Road (Nr Hotel West View) Ghazababad Ghazababad Uttar Pradesh 201009	24-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00000848) (delhi Janak puri), Deepak Jaiswal(borrower Name)/seema Jaiswal(coborrower_name1)	27-12-2019 for Rs.8364841/- (Eighty Three Lac Sixty Four Thousand Eight Hundred Forty One Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Apartment No. T-26/2304 23rd Floor Tower- T 26, Paras Tiera Sector-137 Noida Gurgaon Haryana 122002	25-06-2020
(Loan Code No. 00001231) (rohini), Neeraj Chaudhary(borrower Name)/Monia Chaudhary(coborrower_name1)	27-12-2019 for Rs.25900942/- (Two Core Fifty Nine Lac Nine Hundred Forty Two Rupees)	All the Part & Parcel of Property Flat No-a-2, 22th Floor, Block A,Amrapali Sapphire, Plot No. Gh 001 Sector-45, Near Chhalera Vill Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh 201301	24-06-2020

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to DHFL as aforesaid, DHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of DHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date : 29-06-2020
Place: Delhi NCR

Sd/-
(Authorised Officer)
Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited

LANKA LIFTS VIRUS CURFEW

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan government on Sunday completely lifted a curfew imposed to contain the spread of the coronavirus after no new case of community infection was recorded for nearly two months in the country.

Sri Lanka has been under a continuous lockdown since March 20, a week after the first local victim of the pandemic

was reported. Initially, a nationwide blanket curfew was imposed but it was later eased for about two-thirds of the country and was mostly confined to nighttime.

The government had ordered partial opening of offices and businesses mid-May. From early June, the restrictions were further relaxed with public transport being allowed.

TAIWAN HOLDS LGBT PRIDE PARADE DESPITE VIRUS

Taipei: The Taiwanese capital held its annual LGBT pride parade on Sunday, making it one of the few places in the world to proceed with such an event in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

The parade in Taipei has drawn tens of thousands of people in the past, but participation numbers on Sunday were reduced by both virus concerns and heavy rain.

American student Loren Couse, 28, said Taipei's ability to hold the parade was "really impressive." "I think Taiwan has done a really good job so far, and I am really proud of living here, not only because it's so open to people like myself, the gay community, but also because I think it's such an example for the world and how to handle the pandemic so far," Couse said. AP



Participants march during the "Taiwan Pride March for the World" at Liberty Square at the CKS Memorial Hall in Taipei, Taiwan on Sunday

Leo Varadkar becomes Deputy PM in historic Irish coalition pact

London: Ireland's Indian-origin Prime Minister, Leo Varadkar, has stepped down to make way for new Irish Prime Minister Micheal Martin as part of a historic coalition deal which will see him return as the PM in over two years' time.

The office of Taoiseach, as the Irish PM is known, is to rotate between Ireland's two centrist parties — Varadkar's Fine Gael and Martin's Fianna Fail — after they agreed ambitious climate targets to seal a power-sharing deal with the Green Party this week.

Martin is expected to lead Ireland until December 2022, when Varadkar is expected to

take over again as Taoiseach. "My first official duties as Tanaiste [Deputy Head] today. Commemorating the Connaught Rangers who, one hundred years ago, mutinied in India in support of Irish independence," said Varadkar in his first Twitter message as the new Irish deputy on Sunday. PTI

Still, those who did take part said it was a testament to Taiwan's ability to contain the pandemic and its commitment to rights for people of all sexual orientations.

Taiwan is the only place in Asia where same-sex marriage is legal, and its liberal political system has long promoted human rights, free speech and freedom of assembly.

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Mississippi moves to strip Confederate image from its flag

Jackson (US): Spectators at the Mississippi Capitol broke into applause Saturday as lawmakers took the first steps toward erasing the Confederate battle emblem from the state flag, a symbol that has come under intensifying criticism in recent weeks amid nationwide protests against racial injustice.

"The eyes of the state, the nation and indeed the world are on this House," the second-ranking office in the Mississippi House, Jason White, told his colleagues.

The House voted by more than the required two-thirds majority to suspend legislative deadlines and file a bill to change the flag. The Senate was expected to vote on the suspension later Saturday. That would allow debate on a bill as soon as Sunday.

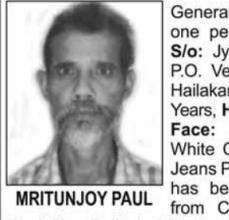
Republican Gov. Tate Reeves said Saturday for the first time that he would sign a bill to change the flag if a majority of the legislature controlled

Legislature sends him one. He had previously said that he would not veto one — a more passive stance.

"The legislature has been deadlocked for days as it considers a new state flag," Reeves said on social media. "The argument over the 1894 flag has become as divisive as the flag itself and it's time to end it. If they send me a bill this weekend, I will sign it." A bill will only need a simple majority to pass the House and Senate. It will say that the current flag will be removed from state law.

A commission would design a new flag that cannot include the Confederate battle emblem but must include the phrase "In God We Trust." The new design would be put on the ballot Nov. 3. If a majority voting that day became the state flag. If a majority reject it, the commission would design a new flag using the same guidelines. AP

SEARCH FOR MISSING



Mr. Ritunjoy Paul

General Public is hereby informed that one person **Name: Ritunjoy Paul, S/o: Jyotimoy Paul, R/o: Tea Factory, P.O. Vernerpur, Lalachera Grant Lala, Hailakandi, Assam-788163, Age: 44 Years, Height: 5'3", Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: White Colour Jacket and Blue Colour Jeans Pant & Black colour shoes in feet** has been missing since 10.02.2020 from C-136 Naraina Industrial Area, Ph-1, New Delhi. In this regard **DD No. 35A, Dated 11.02.2020** has been lodged at **P.S. Naraina, New Delhi**.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing person but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing person please inform the undersigned.

Web-site : <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-Mail ID : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
DP/126/WD/2020

SHO
P.S. Naraina, New Delhi
Ph: 011-25891181, 25892010,
8750871122 & 9891356781

ICT TARIFF CASE: WTO PANEL REQUEST India to block Japan's WTO panel request in ICT

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India will block the requests of Japan and Chinese Taipei for setting up of a dispute settlement panel at the World Trade Organization (WTO) against New Delhi's customs duties on imports of certain information and communication technology (ICT) products, an official said.

The requests of both the countries are scheduled to come up on Monday in the dispute settlement body meeting in Geneva and "we will block it", the official added.

According to the trade dispute norms of the WTO, if these countries would come with their requests for second time, the panel will be set up in the case.

In May last year, both the countries filed a case against India in the WTO over the import duties imposed on certain electronic goods, including telephones for cellular networks; machines for reception, conversion and transmission or regeneration of voice, images or other data; and parts of telephone sets.

They have alleged that imposition of import duties on these products by India infringes WTO norms as India has committed zero per cent bound tariffs on these products. India has strongly opposed these allegations.

While bound tariffs or

The requests of both the countries are scheduled to come up on Monday in the dispute settlement body meeting in Geneva and "we will block it", the official added

duties refer to the ceiling over which a WTO member country cannot impose import duty, the applied tariff is the duty which is currently in place.

India has stated that these ICT products are part of WTO's Information Technology Products (ITA-2) agreement, and New Delhi is not part of this pact. India is a part of ITA-1, signed in 1997, in which it did not contain any obligation to eliminate customs duties on these products.

According to the minutes of the meeting of the dispute settlement body, which was held in February and March, India had stated that it was fully committed to its ITA-1 commitment and had been abiding by it over the years.

India wished to reiterate that it had not intended to commit, and would not commit, to any obligations beyond the scope of India's ITA-1 commitment and it has maintained that the products arising out of technological progression could not be covered by ITA-1, the minutes had said.

"It was evident from a WTO document... That India

had made it very clear at the time of undertaking commitments under ITA-1 that India reserved the right to make technical changes to its schedule and to correct any errors, omissions or inaccuracies," it had added.

Citing examples, they have stated that India applies a 20 per cent duty on products like telephones for cellular networks, which clearly "exceeds" the applicable bound rate of zero per cent set forth in India's schedule.

A WTO member country can file a dispute if it perceives that another country's trade policies or actions are violating global trade norms and impacting their local industry. According to the global trade rules, seeking consultation is the first step of dispute settlement process.

If the bilateral consultations do not result in a satisfactory solution, the complainant can request the WTO to set up a dispute panel to pass a ruling on the matter.

In this case, as the consultations have not yielded positive results, Japan and Chinese Taipei have approached the WTO to set up the panel. Even after establishment of a panel, it would take about 1-1.5 years to come with the ruling.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the passing of the ruling may take more time.

Discoms' outstanding dues to power gencos rise 63% to ₹1.23 lakh cr in April

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Power producers' total outstanding dues owed by distribution firms rose nearly 63 per cent to ₹1.23 lakh crore in April 2020 over the same month previous year, reflecting stress in the sector.

Distribution companies (discoms) owed a total of ₹75,642 crore to power generation firms in April 2019, according to portal PRAAPTI (Payment Ratification And Analysis in Power procurement for bringing Transparency in Invoicing of generators).

The portal was launched in May 2018 to bring in transparency in power purchase transactions between the generators and discoms.

In April 2020, the total overdue amount, which was not cleared even after 60 days of grace period offered by generators, stood at ₹1,08,487 crore as against ₹58,200 crore in the same month of the preceding year.

According to the latest data on the portal, total outstanding dues in April has increased over the preceding month. In March 2020, the total dues of discoms stood at ₹1,13,048 crore.

The overdue amount in April 2020 also increased from ₹1,01,181 crore in March 2020.

Power producers give 60 days to discoms for paying bills for the supply of electricity.

After that, outstanding dues become overdue and genera-

tors charge penal interest on that in most cases.

In order to give relief to power generation companies (gencos), the Centre enforced a payment security mechanism from August 1, 2019.

Under this mechanism, discoms are required to open letters of credit for getting power supply.

The central Government had given moratorium to discoms for paying dues to power generating companies (gencos) in view of COVID-19-induced lockdown.

The Government had also waived the penal charges for late payment of dues in the directive.

Last month, the Government announced ₹90,000 crore liquidity infusion for discoms under which these utilities would get loan at economical rates from Power Finance Corporation and REC Ltd. This was an initiative of the Government to help gencos to remain afloat.

Discoms in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu account for the major portion of dues to power gencos, the data showed.

Overdues of independent power producers amount to 37 per cent of the total overdue of ₹1,08,387 crore of discoms in January.

The proportion of central PSU gencos in the overdue was 35.47 per cent.

World Bank clears \$500 mn to improve quality of education system



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The World Bank on Sunday said its Board of Executive Directors has approved \$500 million (about ₹3,700 crore) loan to improve quality and governance of school education in six Indian states. The board approved a loan for Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Program (STARS) on June 24, 2020, the World Bank said in a statement. "Some 250 million students (between the age of 6 and 17) in 1.5 million schools, and over 10 million teachers will benefit from the program. The STARS program builds on the long partnership between India and the World Bank (since 1994), for strengthening public school education and to support the country's goal of providing Education for All," it said.

Prior to STARS, the bank had provided a total assistance of more than ₹3 billion towards this goal. At the national level, through the Samagra Shiksha, and in partnership with the states of Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Rajasthan, it said.

FPIs turn net buyers in June, invest ₹21,235 cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reversing the three-month selling streak in June, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) pumped in a net ₹21,235 crore in domestic markets amid increasing liquidity and gradual opening up of economy.

According to data from depositories, FPIs invested ₹22,893 crore into equities but pulled out ₹1,658 crore from the debt segment, taking the total net investment to ₹21,235 crore between June 1 and June 26. Prior to this, foreign investors remained net sellers for three consecutive months. They pulled out a net ₹7,366 crore in May, ₹15,403 crore in April and a record ₹1.1 lakh crore in March.

"FPIs are increasing their investments in small- and mid-cap stocks that they were already investing in for over a year now," said Harsh Jain, co-founder and chief operating officer at Groww, said.

India has emerged as the best-performing equity market in the past three months and this is certainly adding to India's appeal as an investment destination, he added.

He further said India has done well in contact-trading of patients, which is helping open up the economy.

"Currently, the valuations are still compressed and equities are attractively priced, which is a good buying oppor-

FPIs invested ₹22,893 crore into equities but pulled out ₹1,658 crore from the debt segment, taking the total net investment to ₹21,235 crore between June 1 and June 26

tunity. With a relatively long-term investment horizon, Indian equities could be a good investment option for FPIs especially once the COVID-19 crisis is resolved and the current market trend reverses," Himanshu Srivastava, associate director-manager research at Morningstar India, said.

In addition to that, increased liquidity in the global markets will also pave its way into the emerging markets, with India also benefiting, Srivastava added.

The Indian financial markets will continue to witness rotational trend with respect to foreign flows. One can expect bouts of sharp net inflows and outflows by FPIs in the Indian financial markets, depending on their changing opinion and global trends, he said.

'Make Indian manufacturing competitive, widespread'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The answer to calls for boycotting Chinese imports lies in making Indian manufacturing much more competitive, deeper and widespread, but people should remember that shunning products from the neighbouring country may lead to them paying more for goods, Maruti Suzuki Chairman RC Bhargava said.

While stating that importing continuously for long period "is not really in anybody's commercial interest", Bhargava also asserted that certain products continue to be imported as there is "little choice in the matter" due to their non-availability in India, or because of quality and pricing issues.

"Everybody knows that importing products over time actually becomes more and more expensive as the rupee gets weaker. If you were importing something 10 years ago, the same product today will cost 60-70% higher..."

"So it is not really in anybody's commercial interest to continue to import, you import because you really have little choice in the matter," Bhargava told PTI in an interview.

Covid-19 crisis COAI urges Govt for cut in levies, seeks relief measures

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Industry body COAI has urged the Government for urgent rationalisation of "high burden" of regulatory levies on telecom service providers (TSPs), including a cut in spectrum charges and licence fee, as it cited adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the sector. In a letter to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) also made a plea for refund of the unutilised input tax credit immediately.

"Else, we request that soft loan at MCLR rate (marginal cost of funding-based lending rate) should be given to companies, using the GST input credit as collateral," COAI Director General Rajan Mathews said in the letter dated June 26.

The association has also urged the Government to rationalise the "high burden of the regulatory levies on the TSPs with immediate effect" citing "the adverse impact on the economy and operations of the digital communication

industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic".

"The effective rate of the spectrum usage charge (SUC) should be reduced by 3 per cent for all the telecom service providers... Licence fee contribution should be immediately brought down from 8 per cent to 3 per cent," Mathews said.

On the issue of good and service tax (GST) or service tax, COAI said levy of GST should be exempted on licence fees, SUC and payment of spectrum acquired in auctions.

"Exempt service tax on amount of licence fee/spectrum usage charges payable by telecom operators in compliance with... Supreme Court order," COAI said. COAI highlighted that it represents all leading telecom service providers, network equipment manufacturers, e-commerce, digital content providers, infrastructure providers and technology partners. All leading players in these sectors, including Reliance Jio, Vodafone Idea, Bharti Airtel, Nokia, Ericsson, Sterlite, Indus, Cisco, Facebook, Google, Amazon, are members of COAI.

India to check power equipment from China for malware

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tightening import norms, India will check all power equipment bought from China for malware and Trojan horses that can be potentially used to trigger electricity grid failures to cripple economic activity in the country, Power Minister RK Singh said.

India has in the recent days taken steps to impose stringent quality control measures and higher tariffs on goods from China as it looks to boost domestic manufacturing to cut reliance on imports.

In an interview to PTI, Singh said his renewable energy ministry has proposed imposing customs duties on some solar power equipment starting August 1 as part of the country's goal of becoming self-sufficient.

"Power is a very sensitive and strategic sector for any country."

Electricity runs all industries, communication systems and all databases including strategic ones and so we have to guard it against any sabotage by countries which are adversaries or possible adversaries," he said. "We want to build a firewall."

CENTRAL BOARD OF DIRECT TAXES Employees allowed to claim I-T exemption on conveyance allowance

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has allowed individuals under new lower tax regime to claim I-T exemption on conveyance allowance received from employers.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has now amended Income Tax rules to prescribe certain exemptions which can be availed by the employees. These include any allowance granted to meet the cost of travel on tour or on

transfer, any allowance, whether, granted on tour or for the period of journey in connection with transfer, to meet the ordinary daily charges incurred by an employee on account of absence from his normal place of duty.

It also includes exemption for any allowance granted to meet the expenditure incurred on conveyance in performance of duties of an office or employment of profit, provided that free conveyance is not provided by the employer.

The CBDT has further clarified that while determining value of perquisites, no exemption will be available in respect of free food and non-alcoholic beverage provided by employer through paid voucher.

Further, blind, deaf and dumb or orthopedically handicapped employees can also claim ad-hoc exemption of transport allowance of ₹3,200 per month while computing salaried income.

Offering an optional lower

rate of income tax to individuals, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget for 2020-21 proposed new optional tax regime under section 115BAC of I-T Act for individuals willing to forego certain specified deductions or exemptions while computing total income for tax purpose.

Under this, annual income up to ₹2.5 lakh is exempt from tax. Those individuals earning between ₹2.5 lakh and ₹5 lakh will pay 5 per cent tax.

Irdai crowdsources names for insurance policies

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Regulator Irdai has invited the public to come up with names for three insurance policies keeping in view the needs and aspirations of the target group.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) has sought names for standard products for dwellings and small businesses in the segment of 'Standard Fire and Special Perils'.

It has announced an award of ₹10,000 each and a citation for suggesting appropriate names. The names should convey the objective of the pol-

It has announced an award of ₹10,000 each and a citation for suggesting appropriate names

icy which is to provide a protective shield to dwelling units and small businesses from catastrophic events, largely floods.

"Recognising the importance of having appropriate names for the proposed standard products that would appeal to the targeted individuals/entities, the Authority... Invites suggestions from the public for suitable names for the products.

"While suggesting names, relevance, simplicity and ease of recall may be kept in mind in addition to the Pan-India usage," it said.

The three policies for which names are being sought are - policy covering dwellings for any sum insured; policy covering micro commercial entities having value at risk at any one location not exceeding ₹5 crore; and policy covering small commercial entities that have value at risk not exceeding ₹50 crore across all insurable asset classes at any one location. Participants are required to send their entries to Irdai by July 10. Earlier this week, it named the policy relat-

ing to the treatment of COVID-19 as 'Corona Kavach Policy'. Meanwhile, Irdai has issued an advisory on COVID 19-related phishing attack campaigns.

Phishing refers to data theft by internet attackers posing as accredited entities.

The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) had recently issued an advisory to guard against large-scale phishing attacks against Indian individuals and businesses. All insurers and regulated entities are advised to alert their staff to exercise extreme caution to prevent any such malicious activities, Irdai said.

NHPC's earns highest ever standalone net profit of ₹3,007 Cr profit during FY 2019-20

New Delhi: NHPC Limited, India's premier hydropower company and a 'Mini Ratna' Category-I Enterprise of the Government of India has declared its Audited Financial Results for the Financial Year 2019-20. The Board of Directors approved the Audited Financial Results for FY 19-20 in the e-meeting held on June 27, 2020 at Faridabad.

NHPC has reported net profit after tax of ₹3,007.17 Crore on standalone basis in the FY 2019-20 compared to ₹2,630.55 crore for the last fiscal year. Sales for the FY 2019-20 stood at ₹8,735.41 crore to ₹8,161.18 crore in the last fiscal year. Consolidated profit for 2019-20 stood at ₹3,324.72 crore before non-controlling interest compared to ₹2,835.79 crore in 2018-19. Consolidated total income of the company in 2019-20 is ₹10,776.64 crore as against ₹9,846.81 crore in 2018-19.

NHPC Power Stations achieved highest ever generation of 26121 Million Units

(MU) in FY 2019-20 as compared to 24193 MUS in FY 2018-19.

The Board of Directors have also recommended final dividend of ₹0.32/- per share for Financial Year 19-20 in addition to interim dividend of ₹1.18/- per share already paid by the Company in March 2020. The total dividend payout for FY 19-20 is ₹1,506.76 crore as compared to total dividend payout of ₹1,466.58 crore for FY 18-19. NHPC, today has about seven lakh shareholders.

AK Singh, CMD, NHPC said, "NHPC has set a target of 10,000 MW installed capacity by 2022 and 13,000 MW installed capacity by 2024 from its current installed capacity of 7071.2 MW. In addition, we have pan-India plans to expand NHPC's solar and wind power portfolio alongwith its core business of hydropower development and we are striving to achieve additional solar capacity of 5,000 MW by 2022 through these sources."

NHPC is currently on an aggressive expansion mode and has established dialogues with concerned authorities across all levels towards exploring newer avenues for development of Hydropower, Solar and Wind projects. NHPC recently held meeting with Government of Himachal Pradesh for execution of 449 MW Dugar Hydroelectric Project, 260 MW Sach Khas, 130 MW Rashid and 104 MW Tandi in the state. A meeting was also held with Government of Sikkim for execution of 500 MW Teesta-VI, 120 MW Rangit-IV and 520 MW Teesta-IV to be executed by NHPC. NHPC has recently signed an MOU with Hydropower Investment and Development Company Limited, Nepal for jointly developing hydropower projects in Nepal. NHPC has also held meetings with top officials for development of solar projects in Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Union Territory of Ladakh and exploring in Rajasthan also.

NTPC: FY20 Profit Before Tax up by 14.15%

New Delhi: The Country's largest power generator-NTPC Ltd. with a group installed capacity of 62110 MW, declared the financial results for FY20 along with the unaudited financial results for Q4 FY20 on 27 June 2020.

In FY20, NTPC has recorded the highest ever commercial capacity addition of 8260 MW which includes acquisition of 2970 MW capacity of THDC and NEEPCO. The gross generation of NTPC Group for FY20 was 290.19 Billion units as against 305.90 Billion units during the previous year.

In addition, the gross generation of THDC & NEEPCO was 10.91 Billion Units. On Standalone basis, the gross generation of NTPC for FY20 was 259.62 Billion units as against 274.45 Billion units in the previous year. Coal stations achieved a

Plant Load Factor of 68.20% as against National Average of 55.89% with an availability factor of 89.67%.

For FY20, the total income crossed the one lakh crore mark and was ₹100,478.41 crore as against ₹92,179.56 crore in FY19, registering an increase of 9%.

For Q4 FY20, total income was ₹28,278.75 crore as against ₹22,545.61 crore in Q4 FY19, registering an increase of 25.43%.

Profit before tax was ₹14,465.92 crore in FY20 as against ₹12,672.52 crore in FY19 registering an increase of 14.15%. For Q4 FY20, PBT was ₹4,383.77 crore, as against ₹3,537.17 crore in Q4 FY19 registering an increase of 23.93%.

Profit after tax was ₹10,112.81 crore in FY20 as against ₹11,749.89 crore in FY19.

GDA sold 12 million industrial plots in Hindi Bhawan



PNS ■ GHAZIABAD

In view of the danger of Covid 19 infection, the Ghaziabad Development Authority has selected the Hindi Bhawan at Lohia Nagar instead of the GDA complex for auction of properties.

In this link, industrial plots of Madhuban Bapudham and Indraprastha Yojana were auctioned today, in which the highest bid of 11 plots was made, in this auction the GDA has earned ₹12 crore.

This information was given by GDA Secretary Santosh Kumar Rai.

China's industrial profits drop 19% in 1st 5 months of 2020

IANS ■ BEIJING

The profits of China's major industrial companies dropped by 19.3 per cent year on year between January and May this year due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said. According to the NBS, industrial profits stood at 1.84 trillion yuan (\$260 billion) for the first five months of the year, reports Efe news. The figure is less than the projections offered by analysts, who had predicted a 22 per cent fall in profits during this period.

The indicator is based on the results of industrial firms with annual revenues above 20 million yuan. Of the 41 industrial sectors surveyed by the NBS, 30 registered a drop in profits between January and May, one managed to retain the same profit while 10 witnessed their earnings rise.

Trend Slazer

'Waiting for director to say action'

Actor **RAJKUMMAR RAO** has shared a couple of childhood photographs of himself and his actress-girlfriend **PATRALEKHA** on Instagram.

"*Baal kalakaar* @patralekhaa," he captioned the images.

The actor has been sharing many throwback pictures lately. He recently recalled his 'Omerta' days in a throwback photograph he shared on social media.

He also posted that he is missing work and is waiting for his director to say 'action'.

He currently has a bag full of projects such as *Ludo*, *Roohi Afza*, *Chhalaang* and *The White Tiger*.



"I have been fortunate enough to have had a healthy and happy childhood. I realise the importance of my upbringing that has impacted and shaped my value system, my perspective to the world, and also made me the person that I'm today. I'm deeply disturbed knowing how many children of my country don't get the childhood that they deserve."

—**Manushi Chhillar**

Actor **SHRUTI HAASAN**, daughter of veteran stars Kamal Haasan and Sarika, took to Instagram, where she shared a throwback picture of herself from an underwater photo-shoot.



She also shared a photograph of her face, where she showed her two birthmarks in her eye and urged everyone to celebrate all the things that make them what they are.

"Yes, those are birthmarks in my eye. No it's not some weird reaction, it's not a disease. Just they get lighter and darker just like freckles. You should celebrate all the things that make you 'YOU'," she wrote.

'Success has not negated racism'

Hollywood actor **IDRIS ELBA** says his celebrity status does not make him immune to racism.

Elba shared that he was raised with the ideas that he had to be "twice as good as the white man" to succeed in life.

The *Pacific Rim* star said, "Success has not negated racism for me. Asking me about racism is like asking me about how long I have been breathing."

"Normally the first time black people have any consciousness around their skin, it is usually about racism. That stays with you regardless of whether you become successful or you beat the system," Elba added.



With all that has been happening around the world, everybody is going through a lot of stress these days. Anxiety levels are on the rise, too. With an aim to analyse sleep patterns during the lockdown, a sleep monitoring device company has studied sleep of over 382 people (14,483 sleeps recorded over 10 weeks) belonging to the age group of 10 to 85 years.

Various parameters such as sleep duration, sleeping time, wake up time and stress levels were monitored. Dr Manvir Bhatia, sleep expert shared, "During this time, I have seen more than 100 patients (teleconsultation) of all ages and genders with sleep complaints. This has resulted in the heaviness of head during the day, increased lethargy, poor productivity and a low mood. These problems appeared new in some patients and some who already had insomnia were doing much worse during this period. As symptoms of anxiety, a few also had complaints of palpitations and difficulty in breathing just before falling asleep. The advice to everyone is to make sure you follow a good day and night routine, adequate exercise, avoid excess use of caffeine and alcohol, and have a relaxing pre-bedtime routine. If the problems persist then please seek help and do not self-medicate."

Following were the parameters explained in detail:

Are you sleeping right?

Our sleep patterns have been compromised by lockdown-induced anxieties. Experts advise we follow a good day and night routine, exercise adequately and avoid excess coffee and alcohol

Sleep duration: Time period where the person is actually sleeping (in N1, N2, N3, REM stage of the sleep cycle). Sleep duration during lockdown didn't deviate much and the median sleep duration continued to remain 430 minutes. For people between 35 to 45 years, median sleep duration increased nearly by 60 minutes and this was particularly found among men.

Sleep time: Sleep onset time, another parameter, especially in the age group of 10 to 45 years had increased by almost 30 minutes. There was a gender disparity when it comes to sleep time. Women's sleep time increased by nearly 90 minutes. However, for men, it increased only by 20 minutes. Women in the 18 to 45 age-group are staying up 90 minutes more late than usual. Earlier, 40 per cent of people used to sleep before 12 am and during lockdown, only 36 per cent of people are sleeping before 12 am.

Wake up time: Wake up time has



increased by 30 minutes across all age groups. However, between 18 to 45 years of age, the wake up time has increased by 70 minutes. While median wake up time for women increased by more than

90 minutes (from 7.30 am to 8.45 am), for males, it increased by 60 minutes (from 7.45 am to 8.45 am). This is a big shift in the circadian rhythm (or biological clock) that governs the hormone

cycle in our body. Once this cycle is off, we are at a higher risk of lifestyle disorders such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and mental disorders. Earlier, 53 per cent of people used to wake up after 8 am and during the lockdown, 49 per cent of people are waking up after 8 am.

Time taken to fall asleep: It's the time period elapsed between the person going to bed and falling asleep. The time taken to fall asleep has gradually increased during the lockdown and has doubled during the first week of May. It has been witnessed across all age groups. Time taken to fall asleep is directly linked to insomnia, which in turn, is highly comorbid with depression. Growing anxiety because of the lockdown and financial insecurity might be the leading reasons for this increase in the time to fall asleep.

Stress levels: Autonomous nervous system activity measured through heart rate variability: There wasn't any significant change in the stress levels of people witnessed. Even though the lockdown has changed people's routine, the stress levels for them have remained the same.

Naps: Initially, the number of naps increased, however, now a dip has been witnessed once the lockdown started to open up.

(The survey is conducted by Dozee.)

TREE OF LIFE

A new show, *Seasonal Wonderlands*, highlights some of the earth's greatest spectacles, showcasing how animals and plants adapt to the seasons and the stunning transformations that occur thereafter. PAUL WILLIAMS, the wildlife TV director and producer of the first episode, shares how he felt revived with TEAM VIVA

Imagine a frozen landscape, an absolute white blanket with no sign of life anywhere, except for an occasional reindeer. After just a few weeks, the sun came out. Then it rose higher each day. The snow started melting, flowers and insects burst out bright while birds arrived from different parts of Europe. And the desolate patch of land turned a vibrant green.

Set in three of the most seasonally changeable landscapes on earth, the new series on Sony BBC Earth, *Seasonal Wonderlands*, reveals the stunning transformations that occur each year and how wildlife copes with them. In Svalbard, one can follow the transformation from a dark, frozen winter to the rich Tundra, home to birds, Arctic foxes, polar bears, walrus and reindeer. In the Okavango Delta, the film reveals how the yearly flood not only transforms the landscape and impacts the lives of the animals that live here but also creates an extraordinary delta. And in New England, as the vivid greens of summer give way to the blazing reds of the fall, the final film shows how the trees work hand in hand with the forest's inhabitants to create this vibrant fiesta. We talk to Paul Williams, the wildlife TV director and producer of the first episode:

□ How did you conceptualise the series?

We have been making a small series about Nature's changing shades across the different parts of the world such as Mexico and Amsterdam for quite a few years now. We wanted to do something different with this three-part series including New England, Okavango and Svalbard. And the thought of seasonal change was quite fascinating to me. There was a story to be told. Seasons in different parts of the world change in different ways. We, thereafter, researched more about it and found the places people would love to travel. Based on our own experience, we found these three locations have interesting insights and many stories to share. New England is about forests and changes in life there, Svalbard is about a frozen landscape with barely anything moving. This series is all about life transformation, animal interaction and personal connection. We want to connect everything, from tiny little creatures to great changers. It is about how life changes within seconds.

□ What are some of the remarkable finds you chanced upon while filming this series?

We are all naturalists and love to dig deep into the natural world. We have come across many different things, which were stories naturally connected to each other. One of the things I found most surprising is how connected animals are to the changing seasons. It's interesting how a single place could give remarkable stories. From the bond between animals to the changing nature, all were vibrating positivity. When we



were in the forests in New England, we were starving and wanted to come out of shade, and it required a lot of patience but the positive vibes over there let us do everything with our heart for the rest of the world to see. I personally loved how people were connected to each other and were involved in giving their best for the series. These were the moments where I would pinch myself, where we are enjoying the wonders of nature closer, capturing those moments for the rest of the world to see. It's about showing people the wonders of our planet.

□ The series is set in three of the most seasonally changeable landscapes on earth. Can you explain how these seasonal transformations affect the wildlife there?

Fundamentally, these changes are about animal reproduction and they need to fine tune with nature. So in Svalbard, for example, when change occurs, the entire landscape was frozen, there was no life anywhere, except for occasional reindeer. After just a few weeks, the sun rose higher each day and the snow started melting, flowers and insects came out, birds arrived from different parts of Europe. This was the change that we saw, a frozen land transforming into a green world. It was incredibly romantic and the timing was perfect. There is a chain reaction that happens. In New England, when snow melts and trees start growing leaves, a woodpecker arrives and when you hear woodpeckers and hummingbirds, that's when you know that spring is on its way. That's what we wanted to capture, everything from tiny to big landscape changes.

□ What were the challenges and difficulties faced while shooting the series?

One of the biggest challenges that we have faced is how to make a story about little creatures, how to narrate that story to the audience and most importantly and how to use technology. I personally went back to capture changes and it was quite difficult for me because had I missed even a single element, then the whole shoot could go down, so timing was very important. Apart from this, we struggled to get intimate shots and to get that, it requires a lot of patience. We were in the wood castle and sometimes we even climbed trees. We also made holes



in trees to set up our cameras but each moment was worth it. We really cherished all those moments and put our heart to it. People can totally relate to the show and feel the essence of it.

□ How is this show different from the other shows you have worked on? What should the audience look forward to in this series?

I think the three places that were chosen are what many people would love to visit. And what we wanted to do was show a very intimate portrayal of those seasonal changes and connections. So it was one of those rare opportunities for the viewer to completely immerse themselves and fall in love with nature.

They can escape to these magnificent places. Most of the series I have made have been global, where we travel all around the world and film different animals. But here, you have a story of these forests and how they change. Every single moment of the film is part of the bigger picture. So I feel people can sit and enjoy the changes and see it themselves.

As there is so much happening in the world with people facing too much negativity. This show is a chance to escape. It helps you to see nature and its richness. Take an hour from your routine, remain stress free, so that you can enjoy nature being at home and remain positive.



Salman Khan praises Aarya

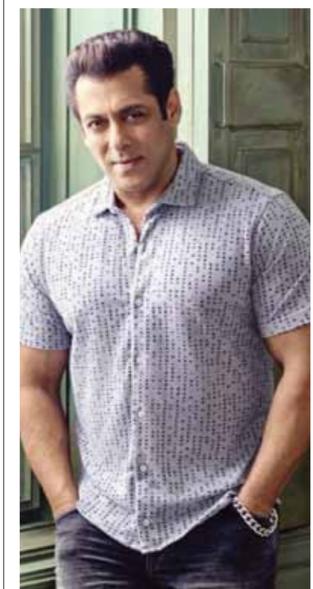
The latest show, *Aarya*, directed by Ram Madhvani, has successfully managed to rule the hearts of the entire nation. Actor Salman Khan took to social media to praise the Sushmita Sen-starrer web series. He calls her *Dabangg*. Recently, popular television actors like Divyanka Tripathi, Mohsin Khan, Hina Khan and Prince Narula also participated in the #Aaryadialoguebaazi challenge.

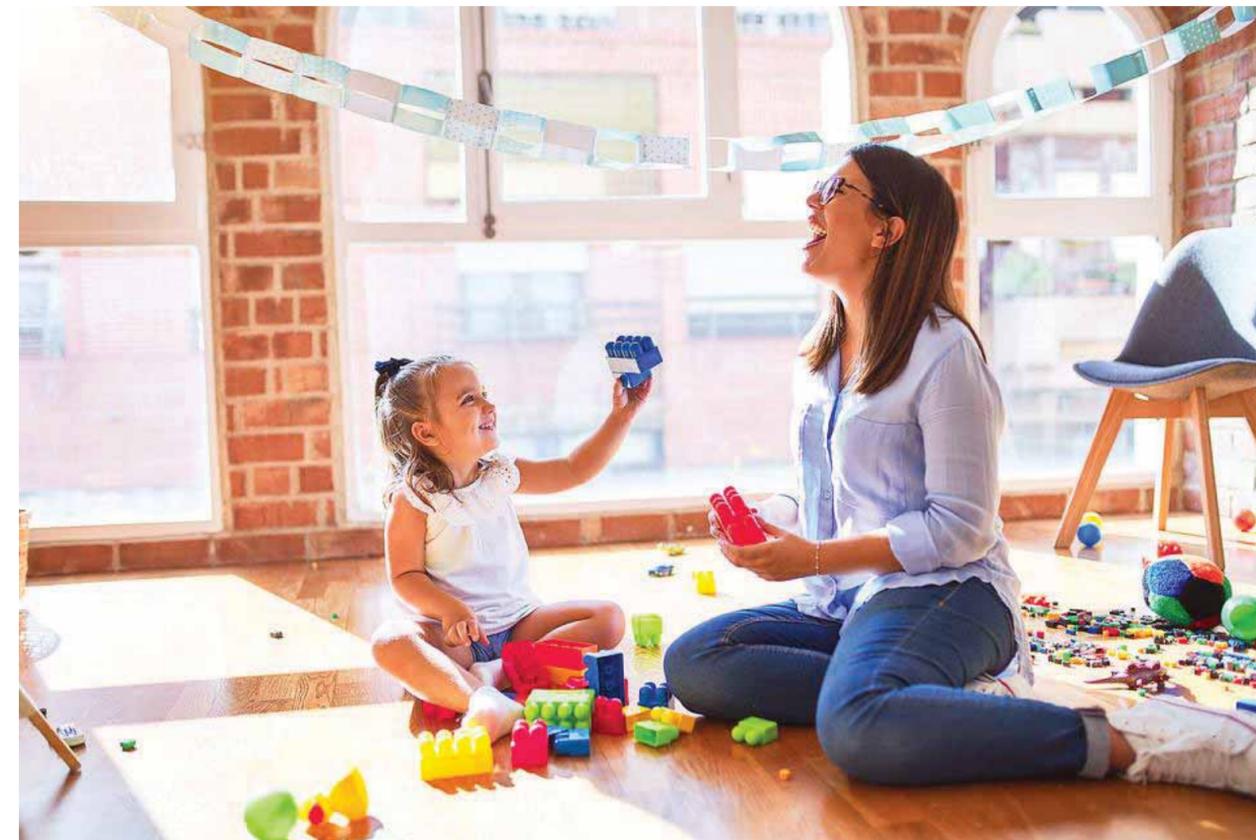
The Hotstar Specials' web series is an adaptation of Dutch drama *Penoza*, which revolves around Aarya Sareen (played by Sushmita Sen), who takes it upon herself to get to the bottom of the truth and bring the culprit to justice after her husband Tej Sareen (played by Chandrachur Singh) is murdered by a masked man. But everyone in the series has secrets of their own. Aarya is reluctant to be involved in the illegal narcotics family business. But her life suddenly turns upside down as her family is being threatened. In the quest to protect them, she is forced to become the very person she always avoided. She realises that to protect her family from criminals, she herself needs to become one. The series explores a few questions — Who has murdered her husband and why? How far will Aarya go to survive and protect her family?

Praising the show in the clip, Salman said, "What can be more fun than classic filmy dialogue-baazi and a show like *Aarya* has got some amazing lines to throw around. Seeing Sushmita lead the series fills my heart with such joy, she has been such an amazing on-screen partner and is a gem of a human being outside of work too." He added, "Ek baar jo maine pehla episode dekh lia uske baad saare episodes dekhe bina mai nahi uthta!" The line renders a quirky twist to his popular *Wanted* dialogue: *Ek baar jo maine commitment kar di, toh phir main khudki bhi nahi sunta*.

The star captioned the video, which currently has over 1.4 million views on the photo-sharing website: "Swagat toh karo Aarya ka! What a comeback and what a show! Congratulations Sushmita Sen aur dher saara pyaar."

Actors Sushmita Sen and Chandrachur Singh returned to the screen after a long hiatus. The show also features actors Namit Das, Shikandar Kher, Jayant Kripalani, Sohaila Kapoor, Sugandha Garg, Maya Sareen, Vishwajeet Pradhan and Manish Chaudhary in pivotal roles.





BUILDING BLOCKS

To keep kids calm, it is important for parents to understand their psychological levels and channelise their energy in the right direction. PANKAJ KUMAR SINGH shares some tips on how to handle this during the pandemic

They need to prepare a routine for Monday-Friday and weekend should be devoted to relaxation and fun activities. To begin with, the day should start with some workout or 10-min yoga session, followed by shower and breakfast and then regular digital classes should be carried till first half of the day with regular intervals in between. Make sure that they drink water in between and walk a bit to keep the digestive system at ease. Post-lunch a power nap is equally advisable keeping the humid weather in mind and evening hour should be dedicated to online surfing.

While excessive use of digital world is not good for mental health of kids but a balanced interaction is good. Parents need to take care of this and should make sure that this platform is not only used for studies but also to engage kids with their peer to fight with anxiety and help them connect with them and break the monotony. It is also suggested that parents can co-ordinate with other parents and plan some virtual games and fun activities for kids, where they all participate. This will not only bring them close, but will also make kids feel happier, especially during evening hours, when they love to be outdoors and spend time with friends.

Apart from this, the digital world can be used to develop new skills among kids too. There are various online platforms offering courses and learning opportunities that will sharpen the aptitude skills of kids. It is important for parents to take some time out, study about such opportunities and help kids utilise the opportunity to sharpen new skills. Evening hours of weekdays can also be used for in-house extra-curricular activities like sketching, painting, writing, gardening, pottery and much more. These activities are refreshing and also keep them away from screen and phone.

might develop a sense of passion in them and they might develop cooking as a hobby. Don't forget to teach them the precautionary measures to be taken care in kitchen and also instruct them not to enter the kitchen area alone.

Make sure that they are early to bed, so that they get good 8-10 hours of sleep and relax body and mind. To cheer them, you may allow them for 30-45 minutes relaxation time by enjoying cartoon network or any animated film.

An interesting way to make them utilise time is to ask them to journal the daily routine in a notebook. This will improve their handwriting and also help you understand their interest in writing and creativity in weaving stories.

All these activities need to be planned from the space of mental stimulation, emotional, and social benefits. There need to be a balance of virtual events to online play dates with peers to texting to video calling along with social media engagements. They also need to be informed that these are a part of the new normal and also it is primary for their mental well-being.

For children, family and friends is a cohesive unit that aids in their development mentally, socially, and emotionally. As a part of existence, it is the duty of parents to teach them the family values and traditions. Connecting with family, relatives, grandparents, and friends help children maintain connectedness and unity and this time can be used to strengthen the same via social media platforms. Also, parents can guide kids to make family tree and cherish the same. This will make them understand the pictorial representation of the same, how important it is to be connected with the roots of existence.

Apart from this, parents just need to listen to them, this will help you understand their feelings, thoughts, and behaviour better; this is significant as it results in invalidating their feelings. While this activity sounds lame to many, but this helps them easily exchange feelings. And we all know that how important it is to share feelings and express what you feel inside-out.

Also, it is important for parents to make kids understand the value of communication. They can do the same by keep that channel open and let them express the plethora of experiences by them. This will help in controlling the trauma effect of the pandemic and will keep kids happy and cheerful. Some other activities that can be added to the above-detailed ones are: Virtual kids party with school friends and family get-togethers, Quiz or competition with peer group, Virtual tour to a museum or historical monument, Art and craft workshop and story writing and craft show.

All these will help maintain the connectedness and keep them away from the negativity of being at home. Most importantly, this will help them understand the value of family and being with the closed ones.

(The writer is the Managing Director, Cambridge Montessori Preschool and Daycare Pvt Ltd.)



The widening gap

If we continue to ignore the social and ethical consequences of our policies to achieve quick economic growth, we may end up turning the country into a moral wasteland, says RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJJI

It's a known fact that during the last two decades, the agriculture sector across the Indian sub-continent has witnessed crisis in the form of decline in rate of growth, rising numbers of farmer's suicides, declining prices of several crops, and a widening gap between the agriculture and non-agriculture sectors.

It can thus be said that the Indian agriculture sector is experiencing unprecedented crisis with stagnation or declining rural employment growth and as a result, food security and employment opportunities for the rural poor have been eroded. Various studies done by research scientists and scholars over a period of time reveal that poverty remains the most common reason for suicides in the country.

As per a report tabled by NCRB in 2015, India reported 5,650 farmer suicides, whereas the highest number of farmer suicides were recorded in 2004 when 18,241 farmers committed suicide as per official figures. In view of these statistics, it becomes clear what havoc skyrocketing prices would have played in the lives of not only farmers but all those who had already been struggling each day to make both ends meet, those who are being pushed to the edge every day because they have hardly any means to live. In addition to this, increase in prices of fuel, essential commodities, and a steep hike in the cost of food grains and vegetables, have made living conditions for the common man unbearable, making him pay through the nose. And still, there seems little hope that the situation would roll back to normal. The repercussions of these are serious. While many are driven to take the extreme step out of despair as stated above, there are others who take to illegal means to make their living. In a crisis situation like the one whole world is facing right now, which has outlived the public's patience span, morality is the first casualty. So, while in the offices, corruption tends to increase robberies and murders, incidents of chain snatchings, auto-thefts become the order of the day. This is the bitter truth of today.



Even though many NGOs are working to improve the lot of the destitute and create employment opportunities for them so that they can earn a living by honest means. But it is not completely possible for these voluntary groups to wipe out poverty and unemployment on their own and their hard efforts will continue to be an uphill struggle as long as the government does not zealously implement pro-poor policies. Ascending prices are always complemented with a sharp decline in the morality levels of the citizens and a surge in the crime graph of the country. As always, it is the poor, the weak and the marginalised sections, including the women and senior citizens, who become soft targets of crime. When taxes are increased, it is fixed income group which bears most of the brunt. The so-called creamy layer — those who amass most of the wealth — often manage to avoid the taxes and pay the minimum they can, by manipulations. In such a situation, the bulk of population is sandwiched between too little income and too many payments. And seeing the rich get away easy, morality to them becomes nothing more than a burden to be shed. It is another thing that there always have been some people who want to take short cuts or bypass the law to make a quick buck, but many are forced into unethical practices by unaffordable cost of living. Hence, the policy makers and the movers and shakers of the country's economy, who dream of making India a global power in the 21st century should very well remember that great nations are built on the foundations of a strong character.

So, if we still continue to ignore the social and ethical consequences of our policies in order to achieve quick economic growth, we may end up turning the country into a moral wasteland where some people have more wealth but nobody has any contentment, security, peace of mind or true and lasting happiness.

—(Charkita Features)

Stories of strength and courage

The ASHA workers of Rajasthan have been fighting the deadly virus since its advent. They have been working tirelessly to help the government in its efforts, says RAKHEE ROYALUKDAR

Bhilwara — one of the worst COVID affected districts in Rajasthan, is being lauded for its efforts for containing the spread of virus by employing successful and effective strategies.

As per the health department, over 6,50,000 homes and 24 lakh people were screened ensuring 100 per cent coverage in both urban and rural regions of the district. The credit for the implementation of the strategy is being rightfully given to "Corona Captains," who were appointed from among SDMs and BDOs and their team of "Corona Fighters" that consisted of four to five members including the panchayat members, teachers and ASHA workers. Of this team, it was the group of 1,66, 600 ASHA workers who have been fighting the deadly virus since its advent into the district. They have been working tirelessly since March to help the government in its efforts. They have been entrusted with the door-to door

survey to keep track of 'High-risk' patients with Corona symptoms, especially among older persons, those with heart conditions, hypertension, respiratory problems, pregnant women and children of up to 10 years. They also must keep track of those who have come from outside or from containment zones or highly contagious places.

Susheela, one of the ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) workers from Dadabari area in textile town in Bhilwara district, was given the task of surveying at least 80 houses for Corona cases in a day. To achieve the target, she would start her day at eight in the morning and work through the scorching heat till late evenings — much beyond the official work hours. "After meeting our targets, there was seldom a day when we got to go home on time. We either had to attend to emergency delivery or had to trace travel history of people returning from outside.



An ASHA worker writing a COVID notice on the gate of one of the houses in Bhilwara.

Then, we were required to report if that person needed to undergo quarantine or self-isolation. Since Corona, it has become a 24-hour job, we hardly have time to relax," shared Susheela.

If not for ASHA workers like Susheela, the state government would have found it impossible to do the contact tracing required to zero down a Corona positive patient. Each day these workers surveyed up to 100 houses, entailing a distance of at least six to seven kms, mostly on foot.

According to Shakuntala Sanghi, 62, another ASHA worker in Bhilwara, they are just given a mask and sometimes gloves along with hand sanitiser till date. "We too are at risk and because of it our families have to face physical as well as mental stress."

To compensate frontline

workers, who die in the line of duty, the state government had announced a compensation package of ₹ 50,000 yet when fifty-two-year-old Vimla Devi, a ASHA worker died, she was denied the assistance. Before her death, she was given the duty of watching over a Corona positive patient and she diligently performed the task for 22 days.

While their designated work hours are four, it often stretches for more than eight hours, especially during time of emergency. For long, they have been demanding to be regularised as government employees and are protesting for an increase in salary of up to ₹ 18,000, which currently is ₹ 2500.

Although, for their dedicated contribution in states efforts to contain the virus, they have been honoured as Corona Fighters but at the

same time, they have only been given ₹ 1000 as incentive while nurses and police working in the frontline have been given an incentive of ₹ 2500. Are the lives of ASHAs any less important?

However, apart from this, ASHAs are officially categorised as "volunteers". The key link between rural community and the public health delivery system under the National Rural Health Mission, ASHAs have been entrusted with crucial roles and responsibilities. They counsel pregnant women, record every birth in the village, keep track of antenatal check-ups, immunisation, supplementary nutrition, sanitation, counsel couples for family planning and also make the community aware about government's various health programmes.

—(Charkita Features)

Intense love does not measure, it just gives.
—Mother Teresa

KIDS MORE RESILIENT AGAINST COVID-19

A 26-country review compiled from 131 studies, the largest systematic review to date of children and young adults with COVID-19, has found that majority of children with COVID-19 fared well clinically compared to adults during the first four months of the pandemic.

While 19 per cent of the pediatric population with COVID-19 had no symptoms, 21 per cent exhibited patchy lesions on lung X-rays.

"Nearly 5.6 per cent suffered from co-infections, such as flu, on top of COVID-19, 3.3 per cent were admitted to intensive care units and seven deaths were reported," according to researchers from the Long School of Medicine at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

"Our data is compiled from 131 studies and encompasses 7,780 patients who span the pediatric age spectrum," said study senior author Alvaro Moreira, assistant professor of pediatrics at UT Health San Antonio.



SPENDING TIME NEAR GAS COOKER CAN LOWER BP

Those who work in the kitchen can find solace in the fact that standing next to a gas cooker can keep their blood pressure in check. According to a unique research, exposure to gas cooker can lower blood pressure and partially offset the adverse cardiovascular effects of air pollution.

The team from King's College London in the UK found that the period next to a gas cooker increased nitrogen dioxide levels in the air 10-fold and subsequently lowered blood pressure by 5 mm Hg from 45 minutes onwards.

The study also found that blood levels of the substance nitrite increased by 15 per cent after 15 minutes.

Previous studies have shown that nitrite, which can be converted from dietary nitrate following the ingestion of green leafy vegetables and beetroot, can lower blood pressure.



COVID LINKED TO ALTERED MENTAL STATE

Researchers have found that some hospitalised COVID-19 patients show signs of confusion, changes in behaviour and other brain complications, including stroke, psychosis and dementia-like syndrome.

The research, based on a study of 153 patients treated in the UK hospitals during the acute phase of the Covid-19, describes a range of neurological and psychiatric complications that may be linked to the disease.

Out of the 153 patients, full clinical details were available for 125 patients, said the study published in the journal The Lancet Psychiatry.

The most common brain complication observed was stroke, which was reported in 77 of 125 patients.

Of these, 57 patients had a stroke caused by a blood clot in the brain, known as an ischaemic stroke, nine patients had a stroke caused by a brain haemorrhage, and one patient had a stroke caused by inflammation in the blood vessels of the brain.



WHY PEOPLE CAN'T RECALL FAMILIAR NAMES?

Most of us know that feeling of trying to retrieve a memory that does not come right away and neuroscientists have now identified different sets of individual neurons which help us retrieve memories when required, a hallmark of the human brain's flexibility.

An essential aspect of cognitive flexibility is our ability to selectively search for information in memory when we need it.

"This is the first time neurons have been described in the human brain that signal memory-based decisions. In addition, our study shows how memories are transferred to the frontal lobe selectively and only when needed," explained senior author Ueli Rutishauser, visiting associate in biology and bioengineering at California Institute of Technology (Caltech).



OVER 5 PEOPLE COMMIT SUICIDE DAILY IN JH

The mental depression is proving to be more dangerous than Coronavirus in Jharkhand these days. If data of suicides is taken into consideration during lockdown and Unlock 1.0, the average of people committing suicide everyday is 5.5.

According to data of the state government, 449 people have committed suicide in March, April and upto June 25. In June itself 134 people have committed suicide. One person is committing suicide every 4.50 hours.

Psychiatrists say that the depression has made deep impact on minds of the people. "During lockdown and Unlock 1.0 1,200 people suffering from depression have approached. During lockdown we were getting more than 150 phone calls everyday from people suffering from depression. There were 20 per cent people who had given up hope to live and wanted to end their life," said a doctor at Central Institute of Psychiatry here.



PL biggies enter FA cup semis

AFP ■ London

Chelsea moved into the FA Cup semi-finals as Ross Barkley sealed a 1-0 win at Leicester, while Arsenal joined their London rivals in the last four after a dramatic 2-1 victory against Sheffield United on Sunday.

Looking to win the first trophy of Frank Lampard's reign, Chelsea recovered from a woeful start at the King Power Stadium. The Blues could easily have been behind before the break, but Lampard rang the changes at half-time and Barkley - one of the players introduced - grabbed the winner with a cool finish.

Chelsea's quarter-final success could be a good omen for the Blues, who beat Leicester at the same stage en route to winning the competition for the eighth and most recent time in 2018. Lampard made six changes to the team that handed the Premier League title to Liverpool with a victory over Manchester City on Thursday.

Chelsea were initially out of sorts as a result and Leicester's Harvey Barnes had a sight of goal inside 30 seconds, the winger's heavy touch letting the ball squirt away as he prepared to shoot. It was a sluggish start from Chelsea and Blues defender Antonio Rudiger angrily admonished his team-mates after snuffing out a Youri Tielemans raid.

When Wilfred Ndidi was given acres of space to head straight at Willy Caballero, Lampard could be heard bellowing "liven up" at his sloppy stars.

There was no immediate improvement from Chelsea and Billy Gilmour gifted possession to Tielemans, who forced Caballero to turn his drive away for a corner. Leicester defender Jonny Evans headed Ben Chilwell's free-kick wastefully wide from close range.



Christian Pulisic had scored in each of Chelsea's first two games since the restart and the United States winger led their response with a fierce strike that Kasper Schmeichel tipped over. Lampard still wasn't satisfied and sent on Barkley, Mateo Kovacic and Cesar Azpilicueta at half-time. Chelsea looked more vibrant after the changes, with Kovacic dominating in midfield. Pressing harder and breaking with purpose, Chelsea took the lead in the 63rd minute.

Willian swung in a teasing cross from the right and Barkley got in front of Evans



to guide a clinical finish past Schmeichel. It was the England midfielder's fourth club goal of the season, with three of those coming in the FA Cup. There was a worry for Lampard when the in-form Pulisic was forced to come off and needed an ice pack on his leg when he reached the bench.

LATE CEBALLOS WINNER
At Bramall Lane, Dani Ceballos fired Arsenal into last four alongside Chelsea and Manchester United. Mikel Arteta's side rode their luck after surviving a second-half barrage from the Blades. Nicolas Pepe put Arsenal ahead with a first-half penal-

ty after Chris Basham fouled Alexandre Lacazette.

David McGoldrick equalised with three minutes left, but on-loan Real Madrid midfielder Ceballos settled it in the final moments. Arteta was Arsenal's captain when they won the FA Cup final against Hull in 2014. And the Gunners boss remains on course to get his hands on the silverware again as Arsenal look to win the competition for a record-extending 14th time.

le Gunnar Solskjaer believes Manchester United's strength in depth will be crucial to their bid to win the FA Cup after they moved into the semi-finals with a 2-1 win over 10-man Norwich on

Saturday.

Solskjaer's side had to work hard for their last-four place as Harry Maguire won it late in extra time at Carrow Road.

Odion Ighalo's opener was cancelled out by Norwich's Todd Cantwell, but Canaries defender Timm Klose was sent off for hauling down Ighalo in the 89th minute.

United gradually wore Norwich down and England defender Maguire pounced to extend their unbeaten run to 14 games in all competitions.

United, who won their 12th and most recent FA Cup in 2016, remain on course to reach the final for the second time in three years.



Lazio comeback to keeps race alive

AP ■ MILAN

Lazio fought back from a goal down to beat Fiorentina 2-1 in Serie A and keep its fading title hopes alive.

Luis Alberto struck seven minutes from time to cut the gap to league leader Juventus back to four points.

Ciro Immobile converted a penalty to cancel out Franck Ribéry's opener for Fiorentina. Lazio's hopes of claiming a first league title since 2000 took a hit midweek when its 21-match unbeaten run ended with a defeat at Atalanta in its first match back following the hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic.

And it seemed as if it was going to slide further when Ribéry curled in the opener following a magnificent solo run in the 25th minute.

But Immobile, who is leading the Serie A goal-scoring chart, converted a penalty in the 67th for his 28th of the season after Fiorentina goalkeeper Bartlomiej Dragowski fouled Felipe Caicedo. Lazio snatched all three points when Luis Alberto surged forward from midfield and an attempted pass to his teammate took a kind deflection back to him and he fired in the winner.

AC Milan thrashed AS Roma by 2-0 in the ongoing Serie A here on Sunday.

Both the teams gave each other a tough competition in the first half, restricting one another from taking a lead.

The second half also witnessed a similar contest between the two until the 76th minute when Ante Rebic scored to break the deadlock.

Hakan Calhanoglu then doubled AC Milan's lead from the penalty spot in the final few minutes, after Chris Smalling was adjudged to have fouled Theo Hernandez.



'Ind footballers can flourish with more exposure'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former Australia and Jamshedpur FC striker Tim Cahill believes Indian football's young talents can flourish with systematic exposure at the top level.

Cahill, who brought his sterling career to an end following his stint with the Jamshedpur-based side in the 2018-19 season of the Indian Super League (ISL), said his experience convinced him that India has what it takes to excel on the conti-

mental and world stages.

"Indian talents just need more games, get them playing all the time and competing and when they go into international fixtures, you (will) see that they can handle the pressure," Cahill was quoted as saying by 'Star Sports Football United' according to the Asian Football Federation website.

The 40-year-old said India is moving towards the right direction to achieve greater heights.

"The ISL and the leagues that

are being played with its infrastructure are great and the only thing that the game needs more than anything is unity.

"Everyone is flowing in the same direction to get to that one goal - which is to win an AFC Asian Cup title, to reach the World Cup and help women's football and to develop your own leagues."

Cahill's spell at Jamshedpur was cut short to 11 matches due to injury but the Australian legend has fond memories of his time with The

Red Miners.

"It was amazing, I lived and breathed everything and was very close to the community as well as the owners from the Tata Group," said Cahill, who had also spent eight years at English Premier League side Everton, featuring in 226 matches with 56 goals to his credit.

"One of the best things about the club was that everything we did was for our fans and everything Jamshedpur FC did was for players."

Trying to bring my best to Eng set-up: Leach

IANS ■ LONDON

England spinner Jack Leach isn't perturbed by the competition for places in the national team and stated that he wants to bring over his best form from club cricket to the international arena in order to become a regular starter in the Test team.

"I'm thinking about trying to bring my best to the England set-up," Leach was quoted as saying by Cricbuzz. "I feel like I haven't done that yet and it takes a bit of working out mentally how you want to go about things."



Joseph wants to prove doubters wrong

PTI ■ MANCHESTER

He might be perceived as the weakest link in the West Indies pace attack but young Alzarri Joseph believes that being relatively "unknown" entity will work to his advantage during the upcoming Test series against England starting July 8.

The West Indies will be playing a three-Test series against England in a bio-secure environment amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the first of its kind in the sport.

The 23-year-old Joseph has played nine Tests so far as a part of the quartet led by Shannon Gabriel along with Kemar Roach and Jason Holder for company.

"Obviously those three guys have a lot more experience than I do," Joseph was quoted as saying by the 'Cricbuzz'.



"I'd think more often than not, teams would see me as the weaker link. I think my job is to come in and just back those bowlers (up) and keep the pressure on."

"It's not necessarily because of age, but because of the number of matches I've played compared to the other three bowlers," the young right arm fast bowler added.

But not being known has its set of advantages as well.

"I could use it as an advantage - I know my abilities and they might not know. But once I turn up on the day and get the job done, I know I can get on top of any opponent."

"I see this tour as an opportunity for me to help the team to get higher up the rankings. Any opportunity I get to play, I'll take it, and whatever the captain and the team require me to do, I'll put my best foot forward."

Entertainment in sport is about quality: Holding

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Spectators certainly add to any high octane contest but the entertainment value of any sport can only be determined by its quality as the English Premier League has shown since its resumption amid the COVID-19 pandemic, feels fast bowling great Michael Holding.

International cricket will be resuming with the much-awaited Test series between England and the West Indies at the Old Trafford from July 8 in a 'bio-secure' spectator-less environment.

Will cricket in the COVID-19 times be devoid of fun and entertainment with fans being kept away?

"Entertainment in any sport is determined by the standard of play in that sport and not by what is happening in the stands," Holding, one of the most respected voices in world cricket, told PTI in an exclusive interaction.

Holding, who spends most of his time in the UK, gave an example of how the quality of EPL's games didn't take a hit despite matches being played in front of empty stands.



"Crowds are very important to add the atmosphere but like football, that has restarted in the UK, the entertainment has been the standard of football played," Holding said.

Asked if the economic implications of COVID-19 will hurt Test cricket in coming days as boards might be inclined to play more white-ball bilaterals, he answered in negative.

"I don't see how that should affect the type of cricket played," Holding said.

'Women's game needs investment, not dubious innovations'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Senior India pacer Shikha Pandey finds suggestions such as use of smaller balls and shorter pitches to make women's game appealing to be "superfluous" and urged the ICC "not to tinker" with rules to attract more audience.

"I have been reading/hearing a lot about the changes being suggested to help grow women's cricket/ make it a more attractive product. I personally feel most of the suggestions to be superfluous," 31-year-old Pandey, a serving officer of the Indian Air Force, wrote.

Pandey, who has 113 wickets from 104 international appearances, drew the analogy of 100m sprints while describing what a light weight ball and 20-yard pitch would mean for women's cricket.

"An Olympic 100m female sprinter doesn't run 80m to win First place medal and clock the same timing as her male counterpart."

"So the whole 'decreasing the length of the pitch' for whatever reasons seems dubious. Also, it almost definitely takes the double headers out of question," she wrote.

While she is game for reduction of size of the cricket ball in women's game but she is completely against reducing the weight simply because of the perception that they can't hit the ball long.

"Please don't bring the boundaries in! We have surprised you with our power-hitting in recent times, so remember, this is only the beginning;



we will get better. Please have patience. We are skilled players, who are evolving," wrote Shikha.

What she finds objectionable is trying to achieve growth through tinkering of rules rather than robust marketing.

"Growth can also be achieved by marketing the sport well. We don't have to tinker with rules or the very fabric of the game to attract an audience."

"Why not have DRS, Snicko, Hotspot, all of the technical acumen and live broadcast for every game that we play anywhere in the world," she questioned, asking for more investment at the grassroots.

Dhoni used to control bowlers in 2007: Pathan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India pacer Irfan Pathan has revealed that World Cup-winning ex-skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni liked to control his bowlers when he started his captaincy stint back in 2007 but came to trust them by 2013, a phase during which he also became a calmer leader.

"In 2007, it was the first time and you understand that when you are given a big responsibility of leading a team, you get excited," Pathan said on Star Sports' 'Cricket Connected' when asked how Dhoni changed as a captain between 2007 and 2013.

"The team meetings were always small though, both in 2007 and 2013 during Champions Trophy, just 5 minutes meeting," added the bowler, who announced his retirement from all forms of cricket earlier this year.

Talking about the one change that he noticed in Dhoni, Pathan said, "when young Mahendra Singh Dhoni became a captain in 2007, he used to run from the wicket-keeping end to the bowler in excitement and try to control the bowler as well."

"By 2013, he was letting the bowler control themselves rather he controlling them, so he understood that and he was very calm and in control in 2013 Champions Trophy."

Kohli can change his game when required: Rathour

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India captain Virat Kohli has the ability to play each format according to what its demands are and the best thing about him is his commitment to the game, according to the team's batting coach Vikram Rathour.

"For me, the best thing about Virat Kohli is his commitment to the game," Rathour told Sportskeeda. "He wants to be the best player in the world and he works hard for that. He puts in the hard yards, and he is the hardest working cricketer that I have seen. Other than that I believe his adaptability is his biggest strength."

"He is not a one dimensional player, he can change his game as and when required. He plays every format differently and that has been one of his greatest strengths," Rathour added.

Rathour took the example of the 2016 season of the Indian Premier League where with a mind numbing 973 runs Kohli almost single handedly took Royal Challengers



Bangalore to the final. "One of the best examples in which I saw in the 2016 IPL where he scored four hundreds and hit 40 odd sixes. He was going through a great patch of form and after that we had a tour to the West Indies. After playing like that for two months in the IPL, he goes to the West Indies and in the first match he scores a double

hundred without hitting a single ball in the air," he further said.

"So that kind of change to bring into your batting because you are playing a different format, not many cricketers can do that. With Virat Kohli, I think he can play the way he wants to play. He can play according to different situations and that I think is his biggest strength," Rathour said.